AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

PRESENT STATE OF THE ISLAND

OF

PUERTO RICO.

COMPRISING

NUMEROUS ORIGINAL FACTS AND DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE STATE OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE, AND OF THE CONDITION, MORAL AND PHYSICAL, OF THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF THE POPULATION IN THAT ISLAND, AS COMPARED WITH THE COLONIES OF OTHER EUROPEAN POWERS; DEMONSTRATING THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SPANISH SLAVE CODE,—THE GREAT ADVANTAGES OF FREE OVER SLAVE LABOUR, &c.

BY

COLONEL FLINTER,

OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMY OF HER MOST CATHOLIC MAJESTY, AND KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL ORDER OF ISABEL THE CATHOLIC.

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THE FOLLOWING PAGES

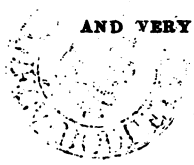
ARE DEDICATED TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE MARQUIS DE ZAMBRANO,

KNIGHT GRAND CROSS OF THE ROYAL AND DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF CHARLES THE THIRD, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL OF THE ARMIES OF HER MOST CATHOLIC MAJESTY, &c., &c., &c.,

AS A PROOF OF THE RESPECT, REGARD, AND AFFECTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S FRIEND,

AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,



GEORGE D. FLINTER.

Madrid, 1833.

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PREFACE.

In this brief preface I can only cursorily advert to the main objects proposed in the publication of the present volume. To make known the great and growing importance of the colonies that remain to Spain in the western hemisphere, and especially of the valuable and fertile island of Puerto Rico; to suggest further improvements in the management of those colonies; and to recommend to the government of Her Most Catholic Majesty the speedy recognition of the independence of the South American republics—these are among the chief objects of the book. Besides these, to exhibit the paternal character of the colonial government of Spain,—to point out the beneficent operation of the Spanish slave code, not only in protecting the bondman from oppression, but in preparing and fitting him for final emancipation,—and to demonstrate, by unanswerable facts, the mighty advantages of free over slave labour, in security, in economy, in productiveness, are objects which I have specially had in view. To the last-mentioned point I earnestly and particularly solicit the reader's attention, at the present critical conjuncture in the history of the West India colonies.

Uninfluenced by the spirit of party, unbiassed by national prejudices, unfettered by sectarian principles, I feel it a duty I owe to humanity, to lay before the public my observations on the condition of the free

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coloured and slave population in the West India colonies of Spain, the result of twenty-one years' experience in that quarter of the world. I appeal not to the passions. I scorn to stoop to the meanness of adulation, or to employ the baseness of deceit. I submit without presumption, with the candour of a soldier, to the reflecting men of all nations, of every religious sect, and of every political creed, the facts I have gathered, and the sources from whence I have derived my information.

It is now twenty-one years since I first landed in the West Indies, a commissioned officer in the regular forces of His Britannic Majesty. At different periods I have been either stationed in the garrisons of the several British islands, and those of other powers conquered by the British arms, or have visited them in a private capacity. I have moreover personally visited the colonies and establishments of all the European nations on the American continent and in the West Indies, as well as the republic of the United States. Both on the continent of America and in the islands, I have myself possessed landed property and slaves. I have been for several years doing duty on the staff of the Spanish army which garrisons the colonies of Her Most Catholic Majesty. My leisure hours have been dedicated to the acquisition of every information that could throw light on the colonial policy of Spain. I have attentively observed the condition, moral and physical, of the white, the free coloured, and the slave population in her West India islands; and from my situation and connexions, I have had access to every source from which correct information could be obtained. I therefore indulge a hope, that the facts which I offer with respect to the colonial administration of Spain, may not be considered unworthy of the notice of those en-

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lightened men who require practical truths to direct their judgment.

If I have taken a retrospective view of the laws and regulations which have long existed in the Spanish transatlantic dominions in favour of the captive African, and compared them with the laws and regulations which till very lately have been in force in the colonies both of France and England, let it not be supposed that I have made this comparison for the purpose of vilifying the latter: my only object is to convey some idea of the wise preparatory measures which have been gradually fitting the slaves for emancipation under the dominion of Spain, at a period when no legislative provisions were enacted, either for their physical comforts, or for their moral improvement, in the colonies of any other European nation. It must be peculiarly gratifying to those who advocate the emancipation of the slaves on sound and salutary principles, to discover by the facts which I present for their consideration, that free labour on a large scale, and attended by the most beneficial consequences, has been for some years in practical operation in the island of Puerto Rico, and that the free black and the slave work together in the same field with the white man. It will also be ascertained by a reference to my observations, that every species of tropical productions may be cultivated by free labour. It is my delight to indulge in prospective views of liberty and happiness for the unfortunate slaves; and I fondly anticipate that much good may ultimately be effected by their progressive emancipation.

Were I permitted to offer my opinion with respect to the policy necessary to be adopted in the Spanish colonies

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at this critical moment, I would unhesitatingly declare that their safety will depend on the energy, the prudence, and the impartial justice of the colonial administration, as well as on the discipline of the troops, and the honourable zeal and fidelity of the officers. One of the first steps of the government should be to drive from the ports of Cuba back to the coast of Africa, every slave ship with its cargo that might be captured by the cruisers of France or England; for the accumulating numbers of these uneducated negroes, let loose on the island among the free blacks and slaves, already too numerous, is introducing a mass of contagion which may produce most calamitous consequences. I am also decidedly convinced that the Spanish government should take the most prompt and energetic measures to prevent the further importation of African slaves into Cuba. Apart from all considerations of morality or humanity, the advantages (if any) arising from this nefarious traffic, can only be temporary, while the evils are enormous, perilous, and permanent. The security of the lives and properties of the white inhabitants depends on the total cessation of the slave trade; for every black or coloured man who lands on their shore is, and must necessarily be, their irreconcilable enemy, as long as that trade continues to exist. The white population of Cuba and Puerto Rico at this moment have every thing at stake. It is of paramount importance that they make common cause with the mother country — that they cling to her as their sheet-anchor in every vicissitude of fortune, and in every political change still look up to her for support; for on this union depends the salvation of every thing that is dear to them on earth.

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THE

PRESENT STATE OF PUERTO RICO.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

An Examination of the Causes that have contributed to the recent Prosperity of Puerto Rico.

SPAIN, the discoverer and mistress of the richest and most fertile regions of the new world, attached very little importance to the Archipelago of the Antilles. The largest and finest only of those islands were selected and colonized by the Spaniards; the small and sterile they abandoned to the industry of more northern nations. The wealthy mines of the Peruvian and Mexican empires occupied the undivided attention of the Spanish government,—exciting in foreign nations a feeling of envy, which, during a period of three ages, remained undiminished.

Notwithstanding all the advantages of soil and situation, which nature has so lavishly bestowed on the island of Puerto Rico, it was considered, for the space of three centuries, only as a place of banishment for the male-

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factors of the mother country. Agriculture had scarcely emerged from its primitive state of simplicity. The inhabitants led a pastoral life, sowing only provisions barely necessary for their support. They had no stimulus to exertion. They were passive spectators of the vast riches which centred in their soil, rocking themselves to and fro in their hammocks, without making any efforts, bodily or mental. If they had a sufficiency for the present hour, they never looked forward beyond the day in which they lived. It can scarcely be said that, till within these last twenty years, the fertile fields of Puerto Rico had felt the vivifying hand of cultivation. A large sum of money was annually sent from Mexico to support the governor, the military and civil officers, and the troops; and this remittance did not cease till the year 1810, when the revolution of that country commenced. The commerce carried on scarcely deserved that name. The few wants of the inhabitants were supplied by a contraband trade with the neighbouring foreign islands of St. Thomas and Santa Cruz. Until the year 1813, the office of intendant was annexed to the person of the governor and captain-general; while the custom house was under the immediate control and inspection of the revenue officers. At this period a separation of these offices was commanded by a royal decree, and henceforward the intendancy and custom-house were placed under the jurisdiction of their appropriate functionaries. Such was the confused and irregular manner in which the accounts were kept, that it would be a fruitless labour to attempt to ascertain the exact amount of imports and exports previous to that period, nor can any calculation be made which could afford any result beyond vague and uncertain conjecture. Although the intendancy was made independent of the captain-general, and the custom-house no longer

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subject to the officers of the treasury, and a numerous train of custom-house officers appointed, the finances still remained languid and unproductive. A system of fraud and peculation prevailed, without shame or disguise. Those who were paid by the king for preventing illicit traffic, were the very persons who sanctioned it by their example, and shielded it by their authority. The amount of the public revenue was so inadequate to meet the expenses of maintaining the troops in garrison, that they were reduced to one-fourth of their pay, and very often received only a miserable ration. The consequence was that an enormous debt, amounting to nearly a million of dollars, was due by the government to the officers and garrison; whilst a few avaricious individuals, forgetting their duty to their king and country, enriched themselves at the public expense. The government, perplexed and embarrassed by the want of specie, had recourse to the ruinous measure of issuing paper money. This desperate step, arising from circumstances equally desperate, not only augmented the debt, already heavy and oppressive, but materially injured the credit of the government, both in and out of the island.

Such was the depressed state of the public revenue in this island, when the royal decree of August, 1815, gave the first great impulse to agriculture and commerce. This decree, fraught with the most beneficent and enlightened views, was entitled, "Regulations for promoting the Population, Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture of the Island of Puerto Rico." It embraced every object, and provided for all the various incidents which could instil life and vigour into an infant colony. It held out to industrious and enterprising foreigners the most flattering prospects, founded on the most solid basis. It conferred on them and their children the rights and

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privileges of Spaniards in their full extent. Lands were granted to them gratis, and no expenses were exacted for the titles and legal rights of property. The quantity of land allotted was in proportion to the number of slaves which each colonist introduced for the cultivation of the land. The colonists were not subject to any taxes whatever, nor had they to pay any duty on the exportation of their produce, nor on the importation of implements of husbandry. If war should be declared between Spain and their native country, their persons and properties were to be respected; and if they wished to leave the colony, they were permitted to realise their property and carry its value along with them, paying only ten per cent. on the surplus of the capital they had brought with them. They were exempted from the capitation tax or personal tribute. Each slave was to pay a tax of one dollar yearly, after having been ten years on the island, which could not be augmented.

During the first five years, the colonists, Spaniards and foreigners, had liberty to return to their respective countries or former residences, and in this case they were allowed to carry with them all the property and goods they had brought with them, without being obliged to pay any duties of exportation. The colonists who should die in the island without heirs, might leave their property to their relatives or friends in other countries; and if the heirs wished to reside in the island, they enjoyed all the rights and privileges of their predecessors. If they preferred carrying away their inheritance, they might do so on paying a duty of fifteen per cent. Should the colonist die intestate, his friends and relatives, in whatever country they might then reside, could inherit his property, by adhering to the foregoing rules.

The colonists were likewise declared to be free, for

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fifteen years, from the payment of tithes; and after the expiration of that period, they were only to pay two and a half per cent. They were equally free, for the same period, from the payment of the duty of Alcabala, on the sale of the produce of their lands and commercial effects, and after the expiration of the specified term, they were only to pay two and a half per cent; but if they shipped their produce to Spain, they had to pay no duty whatever. The introduction of negroes into the island was to be perpetually free from duties and taxes, for the colonists and for those that traded with them. The direct commerce with Spain, and with the other Spanish islands, was to be free from all duties for fifteen years, and after that period it was to be placed on the footing of the other Spanish colonies. The whole of the concessions and exemptions by his Majesty to this island are contained in 33 articles, in all of which a spirit of the most decisive protection is evinced towards this island, and efforts made to promote its prosperity which have never been exceeded by the zeal of any other government or country.

To this signal mark of royal favour we must attribute the rising prosperity of this colony, and not to the operation of time, or to fortuitous circumstances, which could have only a partial or temporary influence. This liberal policy produced the best and most salutary effects. It was sensibly felt in every part of the island. Foreigners possessing capital and agricultural knowledge settled in the country. Their habits of industry soon began to be imitated, and their skill in cultivation acquired by the natives. A spirit of honest emulation was thus excited, which produced the happiest effects.

At the same time that I would strongly recommend foreigners who had capital to settle in this island, in preference to any other part of the globe, I reprobate the

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immigration of adventurers, who, having become bankrupts in the foreign islands, and flying from their creditors, or trying to elude the punishment due to crime, seek an asylum here. This class of people have done more injury to the colony, and thrown more discredit on its agriculture, than is generally supposed; and the reports of their failures, and the calumnies they have circulated, have prevented many useful individuals from forming establishments in this colony. Their stories have been heard and believed; no inquiries have been made into the causes of their failure; their assertions have not met with refutation, and they are commiserated as the innocent victims of an oppressive system of laws, and a despotic government. These false reports once in circulation, if they remain uncontradicted, gain ground, and occasion evils which it is difficult to remedy. Happy am I to be able to explain the origin and motives of these gratuitous calumnies, and to expose their authors to the contempt they merit.

These individuals, with the confidence and effrontery which too often characterise men of desperate fortunes and relaxed morals, purchase estates on credit, counting, no doubt, on the occurrence of some casual circumstance for the payment. In a few months their hopes disappear; their want of capital becomes evident; they are called on to pay the debts that they had contracted in dependence solely on the crop; the day arrives for the payment of the instalment due to the proprietor; they have neither money nor credit, and they are obliged to deliver up the estate. But it is a circumstance of too frequent recurrence that some of them refuse to surrender the property, and enter into a tedious litigation, in which the real owner, in recompense for his good faith, is often ruined; and, if he succeeds in getting possession of the property

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at last, he finds it an uncultivated waste. These people, who are a disgrace to any country, disappointed in their chimerical views, vent their rage on the government and laws of the island, attributing to injustice and a want of protection what is wholly owing to their own folly and presumption.

It would be well worth the attention of those planters in the foreign islands who are employing their capital on worn-out land, which scarcely pays the expense of manure, to turn their views seriously to Puerto Rico, where they will enjoy security and protection, with extraordinary privileges. It is only requisite for them to bestow a moment's reflection on the wise and liberal regulations by which foreigners are encouraged—regulations which are religiously observed. Let them recollect that although many of those who have deceived the government and outraged the laws may have escaped with impunity, it is not either from a want of energy in the government, nor want of vigilance in the authorities, nor of exact execution of the laws, that this has occurred, but from a lenient and humane principle on the part of the government, rather to let a criminal escape than give room for it to be thought that any undue severity had been exercised towards strangers, who came to the island confiding in its justice and protection. The recompense it has received has been the vilest calumnies, which, I understand, have prevented many capitalists from establishing themselves in this colony.

The dreadful political oscillation which shook the Spanish monarchy to its foundation in the year 1820, was felt in its extremities with equal violence. The concentration of command in one individual, so essentially necessary to preserve order in distant colonies, ceased to exist. The principles of firm attachment to the mother

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country which have so eminently distinguished the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, could alone have saved them in a moment so critical. They were proof against the seductions of those who in vain attempted to induce them to follow the example of the Spanish colonies on the continent. They foresaw that the continuance of the revolutionary system would be ere long the destruction of their prosperity. In the four years during which it lasted, their agriculture and commerce had considerably diminished,—party spirit began to show its malignant influence,—the press became the vehicle of abuse and personalities,—the mechanic and the artisan, in place of working for the daily support of their families, mounted the tribune, and harangued the public on the nature of governments and laws—their families starving, while they contented themselves with the noisy applause of a multitude as ignorant as themselves. The epithet of citizen levelled all distinctions of rank and merit. The warrior who had his brows covered with the laurels of a hundred battles—who had exposed his life a thousand times in the public service—and who was covered with honourable wounds and scars in the defence of his country,—was often prevented even from giving his vote by a wretch who had only a few days before escaped from the galleys, where he had been consigned to drag a chain in expiation of his crimes!

This state of things could not long exist,—nature had been forced out of her natural course; all good men, all the industrious, the great mass of the population (with few, very few exceptions) anxiously desired a change. The year 1823 saved this island from inevitable shipwreck. Order was restored—confidence re-established—the loyal flocked round the government—the bad, who were few and impotent, held down their heads in silence.

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Not one drop of blood was shed—no tears bedewed the grave of fallen anarchy. No one was persecuted for former opinions,—the veil of oblivion was thrown over them, in the hope that past experience would furnish conviction of the fallacy of the revolutionary doctrines. Such was the praiseworthy conduct of the captain-general of this island, which fully corresponded to the spirit of generous humanity which emanated from the throne.

The captain-general, Don Miguel de la Torre, was fully invested with vice-regal power, which was so indispensably necessary in order to enable him to check old and inveterate abuses. He saw the deplorable state of the public revenue, and the hidden causes from which it originated. He perceived that extraordinary and decisive measures were imperiously demanded to put a stop to the organized system of defalcation that existed, the continuance of which would have irretrievably ruined the island. The difficult and invidious enterprise of introducing a system of reform in the administration of the public revenue, he executed with the straightforward decision of a soldier, the circumspection and impartiality of a wise legislator, and the comprehensive foresight of a political economist. By these timely and vigorous proceedings, he at once put a stop to the ancient plan of malversation, which had too long existed. This circumstance alone would have been sufficient to render his government for ever memorable. It forms a striking epoch in the history of the improvement of this island. The testimony of its efficacy is indelibly recorded by the immediate increase of the public revenue, which from that day rapidly increased. I refrain from making any comments on these plain and simple facts; and I am even willing chiefly to ascribe the *errors* previously committed in the administration of the public funds, to ignorance or neglect, although

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I fear the world, less indulgent, will scarcely admit this extenuation. The inexorable tribunal of public opinion, judges only from the facts which are presented to its view.

From this period, (1825,) the improvement of the public revenue continued rapidly to advance. All the various duties of the government were diligently executed. The troops in garrison, and all persons employed in the public service, were regularly paid; and nearly half the arrears of back pay were gradually paid off. Confidence in the government, both within the island and in foreign countries, was solidly established. Foreigners, certain of being protected in person and property under an upright and impartial administration, flocked to the island, and engaged either in agricultural pursuits or mercantile operations. Individuals augmented their capitals:—it is only adventurers, without capital or conduct, as I have already explained, that become nominally bankrupts, without having ever possessed any real property to lose.

But all the wise and beneficent regulations, decreed by the Spanish government for the amelioration of this island, and the prudent and energetic measures pursued by the capt.-general, would not by themselves alone have brought the island to its present advanced state, had not internal regulations of police been enacted and other circumstances duly attended to, in order to form a solid, compact, and harmonious system. The attentive observer will here find a vast and instructive field open to his investigation; and it will be perceived with astonishment that more has been accomplished for this island in the space of *seven years,* and more money arising from its revenue expended in works of public utility in that brief period, than the whole amount furnished for the same objects during the preceding period of three hundred years! A country that a few years ago was covered with impervious woods and unhealthy

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swamps, we now find intersected by excellent roads. Unfordable rivers, that in the rainy seasons intercepted the communication between one part of the island and another, are now rendered passable by the erection of bridges. Flourishing towns and smiling villages have risen, as if by magic, where the gigantic trees of the tropical forest, a few years ago, stood in primeval grandeur. The fields where stagnant waters lay infecting the surrounding atmosphere with their effluvia, are covered with rich fields of sugar cane and luxuriant pastures. This scene is enlivened by the comfortable cabins of the islanders, surrounded by groves of plantains and fields of Indian corn. The numerous sea-ports, resorted to by ships of all nations, exhibit every where manifestations of the active and extensive commerce carried on both by the mother country and by foreign powers.

Were I in this place to mention all the improvements in this island by which the last seven years have been distinguished, I should diverge from the plan I have proposed to follow in this work, of classing every subject under its proper head, and of corroborating every statement by authentic authorities.

The deplorable condition of this island from the year 1820 to 1823; the confused state of the public accounts; the unbridled licence of the press; the anarchy inseparable from popular tumults; the want of capital and of confidence; the depressed state of agriculture; and, finally, the impotency of a government divided in power and opinion, offer incontestable proofs that the administration which existed during that period could not be beneficial to any country; whilst, on the other hand, the extraordinary progress of the island from 1823 to 1833 is the most convincing argument that can be offered in favour of the great advantages which redound from the

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administration of a solid, efficient, and paternal government, and the fatal results which are inseparable from the reign of revolutionary anarchy.

I shall now proceed to examine the auxiliary causes which have contributed to the advancement of this island in the career of prosperity and civilization, being fully and intimately persuaded that the first and principal have been the happy re-establishment of His Majesty's Government in 1823, and the wise and judicious manner in which the island has been governed since that period, without which all speculative systems of amelioration would have been visionary. I am equally convinced, that, had the system of government established in 1820 lasted a year longer, this beautiful island would not only have been for ever lost to the Spanish crown, but would at this day have presented a spectacle of misery and anarchy, still more deplorable (if that were possible!) than that which the provinces of Venezuela now offer to the view of the world.

The revolution which took place on the continent of Spanish America, opened an era of prosperity both to Cuba and Puerto Rico; which, combined with the foregoing causes, have brought both these islands to a state of riches and cultivation which they would not otherwise have obtained perhaps for ages. Although it is certainly very painful to reflect that the prosperity of one country should be built on the ruins of another, yet it is a consolation to know, that the inhabitants of this privileged spot have read in the fate of their neighbours a lesson of experience. They have seen practically in what manner, and to what extent, social order, peaceful industry, and submission to the laws, have contributed to individual and general prosperity.

We cannot expect, of course, to find in Puerto Rico the immense commercial and agricultural riches which

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mark Cuba and Jamaica as the richest of the West India islands. The former comprises an extent of territory little inferior to England proper, not including Wales, with nearly half a million of slaves; the latter, besides being the great depôt of British manufactures, from whence the new republics receive their supplies, contains upwards of 300,000 slaves, and many great capitals. We must therefore content ourselves in tracing the rapid developement of the immense resources which nature has bestowed on this island, prognosticating what may yet be expected from industrious perseverance.

I have already remarked, that the revolution which took place in Spanish America had essentially contributed to augment the population, riches, and importance of Cuba and Puerto Rico. I shall now proceed to examine with impartiality the causes of this event, and its effects on this island.

The merchants of Spain had for centuries carried on an extensive and lucrative commerce with the American continent. By the revolution in that country, they were at once unexpectedly deprived of this great theatre of speculation: they found themselves reduced to the limited sphere of operations which might have been expected from the almost infant state of agriculture in Cuba and this island, owing to the want of hands and of capital. They were therefore compelled to limit their views to the circumstances in which they were placed by events as extraordinary as they were unforeseen. Many of the merchants and planters established on the continent emigrated to this island. Some of them founded estates; others formed small commercial establishments; and others lent out their money on interest to the planters. All felt the necessity of active and parsimonious industry.

The extensive emigration which, like a rapid succession

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of waves, annually flowed from Spain to her American colonies, receded back on her shores. As it consisted chiefly of the young and vigorous, this check had the beneficial effect of increasing the population of the parent state, and of concentrating within herself her industry, and thus drawing forth more vigorously the inexhaustible native riches which Spain possesses in great pre-eminence over most of the other nations of Europe; whilst, on the other hand, the impolitic measures pursued by the governments of the new republics, which expelled the natives of Old Spain from their territories, considerably increased both the population and riches of this island and Cuba. Many of these emigrants were among the most wealthy and industrious of the community; and many of them carried with them their effective wealth.

Other reasons, besides those just stated, have concurred to accelerate the progress of this island in the career of wealth and consequence. The formation of a disciplined body of militia, amounting to a force of 7000 men, may appear perhaps to the superficial observer only an ordinary measure of defence for the island; but it was, in fact, a step of profound policy. It embraced a wide extent of advantages, which every day unfold themselves to view. It gave new life and vigour to agriculture and to general industry. The inhabitants, dispersed over the face of the country, living in isolated houses, had scarcely any incentive to industry. A few coffee-trees, which required little cultivation, produced the fruit which made their favourite beverage; the plantain produced them abundance of food; their climate required little clothing; and thus, their wants being few, their time was either spent swinging in the hammock, or in the amusement of cock-fighting, to which they have an extraordinary attachment. The establishment of the corps

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of disciplined militia obliged these men to leave their huts, to abandon their indolent and unsocial manners, and to step forward on the stage of social life. They were obliged to appear in the towns on Sundays, for the purpose of instruction in the exercise of arms; consequently, they were compelled to be better dressed, and each individual was led to vie with his neighbour in cleanliness and punctuality. An emulation so natural to the human breast soon produced the most salutary effects. It created new wants, which could not be supplied but by application to the labours of the field. They were led to cultivate more coffee and plantains, sugar cane and cotton: a greater quantity of produce was consequently brought to market, and a greater quantity of manufactured goods consumed than formerly. The manners of the people were also softened, and their morals ameliorated. The progressive and invariable operation of these causes gave an impulse to agriculture and commerce; at the same time that it aroused the population from the listless activity of an almost savage life, to the intellectual improvement attendant on exertion and social intercourse.

Those that have raised their voices against the establishment of the militia, as dangerous to the safety of the colony, did not, perhaps, reflect, that men enjoying the advantages of civilized life, possessing reasoning faculties to compare their state with that of the revolutionized provinces, having their homes to defend, are only formidable to foreign enemies, or to domestic incendiaries. Arms can never be better confided than to the hands of the industrious, who always have a deep interest in preserving order and obeying the laws. The idle and licentious only are dangerous; they are always ready to promote disorders, and are generally the most ignorant, as well as the most useless, members of every state.

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Another cause which had a powerful influence on the prosperity of this colony was the immigration from St. Domingo and the provinces of Venezuela. These places being tolerably advanced in civilization, the emigrants brought along with them the habits of industry and subordination. They also brought small capitals in money; and they were not actuated by that disposition to ostentation and expense which, in the foreign islands, interferes so materially with the augmentation of property. Utility being the great object these new settlers had in view, their expenses did not much exceed the limits of necessity; consequently, many of them gradually amassed considerable fortunes. The towns and villages in the island are few, most of them of a small size; and the majority of the inhabitants lead a country life,—a situation of all others the most conducive to habits of economy. The government is also guided by a correspondent train of feeling: the expenditure is confined within very narrow limits; the consequence of which is, that the taxes are very light, and the inhabitants are left in possession of all the fruits of their labour. The augmentation of property would be still more rapid were capital greater; but, as a profound writer observes, "men of large capital seldom emigrate to distant countries, and consequently the rate of interest for money must be high."

Of the advantages which this island offers to new settlers one of the most important is the abundance of the means of subsistence. The forests, which afforded a scanty supply to a few families of savage Indians, are converted by the axe and the plough of the agriculturist into luxuriant fields of sugar cane and pasturage for cattle. In such a country as this a numerous family of children, instead of being a burthen on their parents, become a source of additional income. Uncleared land is liberally granted

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by the government to colonists gratis, and free of all expenses, so that the means of extending cultivation are within the reach of all persons—even of the lowest class. Domestic servants and mechanics are much more independent of their masters than in countries where recourse to agricultural habits is impracticable. These circumstances have the good effects of affording strong inducements to industry. The journeymen in town as well as the labourers in the country, are enabled soon to engage in business on their own account, and to pay their assistants the same liberal rate of wages they formerly received. The chief expense of a family, therefore, consists in the price of manufactured goods, which it is necessary to import from the mother country or from foreign parts. In the existence of these circumstances, added to those I have already described, and many other subordinate ones that may have escaped my observation, will be found the explanation of the rapid improvement of this important island. By attending to the differences of climate and situation, we might be enabled, on similar principles, to account for the causes of the advancement of almost all colonies. "We might trace their uniform operation in the ancient settlements of Asia Minor, Italy, and Sicily, as clearly as in the well-authenticated history of modern colonies. It was in consequence of such causes, that Tyre rose superior to Sidon, and Carthage in her turn to Tyre." And, from their progressive operation, aided by the influence of a beneficent and paternal government, the island of Puerto Rico bids fair, before the expiration of half a century, to exhibit a population of a million of souls,—furnishing a revenue great beyond the possibility of present calculation.

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CHAPTER II.

Situation and general Appearance of Puerto Rico—Interior Ridge of Mountains—Principal Valleys and fertile Plains—Rivers, Lakes, and Lagoons—Facilities for Water Carriage—Roads and Bridges—Ports and Harbours—Towns and Villages—Description of the Capital, San Juan—Comparative Population of the Towns and the Country—Climate—Wet and dry Seasons—Hurricanes—Comparative Salubrity—Absence of noxious Reptiles—Paucity of indigenous Animals—Effects of the Climate on Europeans—Official Statement of Mortality in the Spanish Regiment of Grenada—Diseases—Suggestions for preserving the Health of the Troops.

THE Island of Puerto Rico is situate in the Atlantic Ocean, about 3450 miles from the Land's End in England, and 3180 from the port of Cadiz. It is about 90 miles in length, from E. to W., by 33 miles in average breadth; and contains, according to the most exact admeasurement, a plane superficies of 2970 square miles. It lies eastward of the greater Antilles, Cuba, Hayti, and Jamaica; and, although inferior even to the last of these islands in population and extent, it yields to none of them in fertility and general importance.

This island was discovered by Columbus, in 1493.

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According to the best information, he first anchored at Aguadilla, a port situate on the western coast, so called from the facility it afforded for obtaining water for the shipping. The subsequent history of the island, and the manner in which it was subjected to the Spanish dominion, has been so fully detailed by Father Inigo, and other writers, that it is unnecessary for me to enter upon it.

By its geographical position, Puerto Rico is peculiarly adapted to become the centre of an extensive and flourishing commerce. It lies to the windward of the rich and populous islands of Cuba, Hayti, and Jamaica, and of the Gulf of Mexico and Bay of Honduras, which embrace an immense extent of the American continent. It is contiguous to all the English and French windward islands; only a few hours' sail from the Danish islands of St. Thomas and St. Cruz; and a few days' sail from the coasts of Venezuela and the United States of America. Besides these local advantages, and the rich productions of its cultured soil, it is well supplied with wood and water, which are generally scarce in the small islands to windward. Many of them, in fact, being destitute of springs, depend altogether on the water collected after the periodical rains; and consequently in time of drought the inhabitants are occasionally reduced to the greatest extremity for want of this indispensable article; while for an expensive and precarious supply of wood, they are forced to resort to some distant colony.

Puerto Rico is the fourth in size of the great Antilles. Its appearance to the eye of a European is exceedingly striking and picturesque. Nature here offers herself to his contemplation under an aspect at once strange and enchanting, and clothed in the rich and splendid vesture of the most luxuriant vegetation. If the voyager has

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sailed from Europe in the midst of winter, when every blast chills the blood, and nature seems in a state of death-like torpor—the trees divested of their leaves, and the meadows of their verdure,—he feels removed, as if by magic, to the fabled regions of eternal spring. The contrast is so great and striking that one must have experienced, to appreciate fully, its singular effect. In place of beholding all nature cramped with cold, and shivering in her snowy mantle, the heart dilates with the joyful prospect of beautiful and fertile valleys, embellished with towns and villages, and studded in every direction with the mansions of wealthy proprietors and the embowered cottages of the peasantry. The whole island has the appearance of a continued chain of human habitations, intermixed with fields of sugar cane, patches of rice and Indian corn, groves of plantains, and plantations of coffee. Clumps of palm trees, scattered over the plains, and ornamenting by their graceful foliage the sides of the little hills, which rise in the valleys like gentle undulations on the bosom of the ocean, afford a cool shade to the cattle from the noon-day sun. The dense columns of smoke from the sugar manufactories, the numerous herds of cattle grazing in the pasture land, the numbers of men and women on horseback crossing the country in every direction, impart an appearance of life and bustle to the surrounding scenery; while the aspect of the mountains, blue in the distance, covered with trees to their very summits, and rising above each other in regular gradation till they lose themselves in the clouds, completes the magnificent picture,—at once beautiful and sublime. What a striking contrast at the same time does it afford to the woods and plains of South America, where the solemn silence of nature is seldom disturbed by the voice

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of man! There the wild beast of the forest roams the undisputed lord; here man asserts the dignity of his species. The chain of lofty mountains which intersects the island from east to west, seems at first sight to form two distinct chains parallel to each other; but closer observation makes it evident that they are in reality corresponding parts of the same chain, with upland valleys and table land in the centre; which again rise gradually and incorporate themselves with the higher ridges. The height of these mountains would appear very inconsiderable if compared with the stupendous peaks of the Andes, but when compared with those of the other islands they may be denominated lofty. The loftiest part of the chain is that of Luguillo, at the N. E. extremity of the island, which measures 1334 Castilian yards, and the highest point, denominated the Yungue, may be discerned at the immense distance of 68 miles at sea. The summit of this ridge is almost always enveloped in mist, and when its sides are overhung by white fleecy clouds, it is the certain precursor of the heavy showers which fertilize the northern coast. The soil in the centre of the mountains is excellent, and the mountains themselves are susceptible of cultivation to their very tops. They do not present that rocky and precipitous surface which render the mountains of other countries sterile or inaccessible. Valleys and table land and gentle slopes are to be found in every part of them; and, hanging upon their sides, we find houses, and coffee plants, groves of plantains, plots of tobacco, and herds of cattle. Several villages are situate among these mountains, where the inhabitants enjoy the coolness of the spring of Europe and a pure and salubrious atmosphere. The village of Aybonito, built on a piece of table land in the mountains, about eight leagues from

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Ponce, on the southern coast, enjoys a delightful climate, —so cool that it is found necessary to put on clothing of a warmer texture than is generally used in the lower country. Here are found all the fruits and vegetables of Europe, with the climate of Europe in the torrid zone. The pasture for sheep and cattle is excellent: the sides of the brooks are covered with mint and other aromatic plants, which impart a peculiar delicate flavour to the flesh of the animals which feed on them.

To the north and south of this interior ridge of mountains, stretching along the sea coasts, are situate the fertile valleys which produce the chief wealth of the island. From the principal chain smaller ridges run north and south, forming between them innumerable valleys, which take their names from the principal towns that have been erected in them. These valleys, the most beautiful I have ever beheld, are fertilized by limpid streams, which descending from the mountains, empty themselves into the sea on either coast. The valleys formed among the large chains of mountains are not so level as those which stretch along the coast; they present an unequal, undulating surface, and a continued succession of gentle acclivities, covered with trees displaying all the varied colours and vivid foliage of the tropics.—The majestic beauty of the palm trees; the pleasant alternation of hill and dale; the lively verdure of the hills, compared with the deeper tints of the extensive forests that decorate their sides; the orange trees growing wild, and covered with their golden fruit; the rivers winding through the dales; the luxuriant, cultured fields of sugar cane, Indian corn, and rice; with here and there a house peeping through a grove of plantains, and cattle grazing in the green pasture; form altogether a landscape of rural beauty scarcely to be surpassed in any country in the

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world. It appears to the traveller difficult to say which of these pleasant valleys is the most charming; every one I saw appeared to me more beautiful than the one that preceded it; they are all fertile, all well watered, and under cultivation.

The valleys of the north and east coasts are the richest in cattle and the most picturesque, the pasturage there being always verdant and luxuriant from the quantity of rain that falls on them; while those of the south coast, richer than the north in sugar, are often parched by excessive drought, which, however, does not affect their fertility, for water is found on digging half a yard from the surface of the earth. The same alternation of rain and drought on the north and south coasts, is generally observed in all the West India islands.

The extensive and beautiful valley of Toabago is situate on the north coast, fronting the capital on the opposite side of the harbour. It stretches to the base of the mountains towards the south, and on the east communicates with the valley of Bayano; the latter again runs into the extensive plains of Caguas, on which the towns of Jincos, Jurah, and St. Lorenzo are situate; and these again are separated from Truxillo and the valleys of Loisa, which join Fajardo and terminate on the eastern extremity of the island. To the west of the capital, on the north coast, lie the fertile pasture lands of Manati, which are separated from the picturesque valley of Arecibo by a gentle eminence. All these valleys are rich and pleasant; but that of Arecibo is pre-eminently beautiful: it extends north to the sea-shore, and to the west and south for several leagues, skirted by a range of hills forming a semicircle. It is covered with plantations of sugar-cane, farm-houses, and cattle, and is one of the richest valleys in the island. To give detailed

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descriptions of all these valleys would require a separate volume: I must, therefore, be content with offering an imperfect general outline of them.

The plains of St. German, on the south-west, and of Mayagues on the west, are extremely fertile; the latter is covered with sugar cane, the former with small plantations of corn and rice, and with cattle. St. German is by far the most populous district in the island, containing nearly 40,000 inhabitants, the greater part of whom are whites, living by agriculture and rearing cattle, and working personally in the field. On the south side are the fertile tracts of level land on which the flourishing agricultural and commercial towns of Ponce and Guayama are situated. From the estates established in these districts is produced the greater part of the sugar which is exported from the island.

I have only beheld, in the whole of the island, two tracts of land entirely without houses and without a mixture of cultivation. The one is a tract of mountainous land, covered with wood, extending from the town of Couna to that of Juana Diaz,—a distance of five leagues. The other extends from the Punta de Aguila on the s. w. coast, to the deserted port of Guanica on the south, and is a valuable tract of land, covered with wood and swamp without any cultivation whatever. The island will be much benefited, and particularly the populous district of St. German, if the intention of government is carried into effect, to form a town at the port of Guanica, and to make a road between these places,—a scheme which can be effected without difficulty, as the intervening land is level. The captain-general has also wisely determined to make a division among the poor labourers of the lands of that place, which were, until the present moment, monopolized by two or three

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individuals who could not cultivate them. The port of Guanica may be considered naturally one of the best in the island; and if the fertile valley which stretches along the coast were brought into cultivation, a source of riches would be opened to the populous districts of St. German and Pepiro by a road being made to this port, which could be done with facility and without great expense. The captain-general suggested to the cavildo of St. German the great importance of this undertaking, which they unanimously agreed to carry into effect. Besides the general utility of forming this road, and cultivating and colonizing this abandoned coast, it would prevent an invading enemy from taking possession of this secure port, and by this means penetrating into the heart of the country and taking up a position among the fastnesses of the island, from which it would be difficult to dislodge him.

Few countries of the extent of Puerto Rico are watered by so many streams. Seventeen rivers, taking their rise in the mountains, cross the valleys of the north coast, and fall into the sea. Some of these are navigable for two or three leagues from their mouths, for schooners and small coasting vessels. Those of Manati, Loisa, Trabajo, and Arecibo, are very deep and broad, and it is difficult to imagine how such large bodies of water could be collected in so short a course. Owing to the heavy surf which continually breaks on the north coast, these rivers have bars across their embouchures which do not allow large vessels to enter. The rivers of Bayamo and Rio Piedras flow into the harbour of the capital, and are also navigable for boats. Notwithstanding the bar, however, which crosses the mouth of the river of Arecibo, at high water small brigs may enter with perfect safety, and discharge their cargoes. This facility of water carriage is of

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great importance to the inhabitants of these valleys, who can safely and cheaply export the produce of their land. All the banks of the rivers of the north coast are under cultivation, unless where the land is so very low that it is periodically overflowed; in which case it becomes unfit for the sugar cane, but the pasture is exceedingly luxuriant and profitable. The rivers of the north coast have thus a decided advantage over those of the south coast, where the climate is drier and the rains less frequent. Nevertheless, the south, west, and east coasts are well supplied with water; and, although in some seasons it does not rain for ten, and even sometimes for twelve months on the south coast, the rivers are never entirely dried up. From the Cabeya de San Juan, which is the N.E. extremity of the island, to the cape of Mala Pascua, which lies to the S.E., nine rivers fall into the sea. From Cape Mala Pascua to Point Aguila, which forms the S.W. angle of the island, sixteen rivers discharge their waters on the south coast. On the west coast, three rivers, five rivulets, and several fresh water lakes communicate with the sea. In the small extent of 330 leagues of superficies, we meet with 46 rivers, besides a countless number of rivulets and branches of navigable water. The rivers of the north coast are well stocked with delicious fish, some of them so large as to weigh two quintals. From the river of Arecibo to that of Manati, a distance of five leagues, a fresh water lagoon, perfectly navigable for small vessels through the whole of its extent, runs parallel to the sea at about a mile from the shore. With a very trifling expenditure, the communication between this lake and both these rivers might be opened: it is only separated from the river of Manati by a few yards of swampy ground, and it joins the river of Arecibo. This would facilitate the exportation of the rich productions of these fertile valleys, and be a new source

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of riches to the inhabitants.* In the fertile valley of Añasco, on the western coast, there is another canal formed by nature, deep and navigable: it runs through its centre, and at a very small expense might be made to communicate with the river, which falls into the sea, and which is navigable for boats. This is a measure of great importance, and the work, I am happy to see, is in contemplation. It will triple the value of the land in its vicinity, and many fertile and extensive tracts will be brought into cultivation, which are now swampy wastes. The soil of this valley is so very humid that in the rainy season it is dangerous, difficult, and very expensive to carry the produce of the estates to market. To make good roads through this marshy land would be too expensive an undertaking for the present circumstances of the country; but water carriage, which is always preferable to land carriage, where it is practicable, might be attained by a trifling sacrifice of manual labour. It is to be hoped that the inhabitants will profit by the salutary recommendation of the captain-general on this subject, and carry into immediate effect a work of such unquestionable benefit. The great advantages of water carriage are too obvious to render it necessary to impress on the minds of the land proprietors of the north coast, the utility of bestirring themselves to accomplish this object. It only requires enterprising individuals to set the example. The government, being most anxious to encourage and promote measures of general utility, has offered to concur in the prosecution of such undertakings. No island in the

* The salt water lake of Cangrejos, also on the north coast, east of the capital, communicates with the harbour, and has been joined to another lagoon near Truxillo by a canal, made by order of the present government, which is navigable for six leagues from the capital, and by which produce can be brought to the very wharf.

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West Indies possesses natural facilities for internal navigation to such an extent as the north coast of Puerto Rico; while the advantages that might be derived from applying the superabundance of water to drive machinery are almost incalculable. One water saw-mill, for cutting boards, has been established near the village of Camuy, at the mouth of the river which runs between that place and the village of Hatillo. As the island advances in population and riches, it is to be hoped the inhabitants will not view with indifference the advantages which these rivers offer for the saving of manual labour.

A very few years ago foot-paths were the only means of intercourse between one part of the island and another, and even these, in the rainy season, were dangerous, and at times impassable. The rivers and deep-channelled brooks, swollen to furious torrents by the violence of the tropical rains, completely intercepted all intercourse between the country and the seaports, between the different towns, and even between one neighbour and another. Many lives were frequently sacrificed in rash attempts to swim across the torrents; and there is scarcely a river or a brook which intersects the country but may count some human victims, who have perished on their way to or from the seaports. Commerce was entirely paralysed during the rainy months; nor could the orders of government be conveyed with celerity or certainty, which is always an object of such pre-eminent importance. Carts or carriages were things unknown in the island till within these very few years. The produce of the fields was carried to market on the backs of horses and mules; as is still the case on the adjacent continent, where, during twenty years of revolution, a single new road has not been made nor an old one repaired. The sugar cane for grinding, and the fuel for the boiling-houses, were dragged

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by the negroes on the estates; and the freight paid for coffee from the interior to the coast was often equal to its value. Thus agriculture was retarded and could not prosper. Since the year 1824, the opening and consolidating of roads, and constructing of bridges, has occupied the attention of government, as the only means of awaking the dormant spirit of industry. From the facility of water carriage on the north coast, roads were not so imperiously required as on the south coasts; nevertheless, from Palo Seco, which is situated about a mile and a half from the capital, on the opposite side of the bay, a carriage road, perfectly level, has been constructed, for a distance of twenty-two leagues, to the town of Aguadilla on the west coast, passing through the towns of Vegabaja, Manati, Arecibo, Hatillo, Camuy, and Isabella. This road has been carried for several leagues over swampy lands, which are intersected by deep drains to carry off the water.

The roads formed in Puerto Rico are not temporary tracks, but are constructed on a substantial plan; the centre being filled with gravel and stones well cemented. Each town makes and keeps in repair the roads of its respective district. Many excellent and solid bridges, with stone abutments where the strength of the current rendered it necessary, have also been constructed over the rivers of this coast, which secure the communication at all seasons; and, as the native timber of the island does not rot under water, like the pine of North America, but becomes incorruptible, these bridges are at once useful, durable, and ornamental.

On the south coast great pains have also been taken to construct roads; and as the rains are here less frequent than on the north side of the island, they are more easily kept in repair; while this part of the country having the

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advantage of navigable rivers, the necessity of good roads is more urgent. The road from Aguadilla to Mayagues is in some parts very good, in other parts only tolerable. From Aguadilla to the Aguada, a distance of a league, the road is excellent and level. From thence to Mayagues, through the village of Rincon and the town of Añasco, the road is generally good, but on the sea shore it is sometimes interrupted by shelving rocks. Across the valley of Añasco, the road is carried through a boggy tract, with bridges over several deep creeks of fresh water. From thence to the large commercial town of Mayagues, the road is uneven and requires some improvement. But the roads from Mayagues and Ponce, another large commercial town, to their respective ports on the sea shore, cannot be surpassed by any in Europe: they are made in a most substantial manner, and their convex form is well adapted to preserve them from the destruction caused by the heavy rains of the climate. It were to be wished that these roads might be taken as models for the construction of all the roads of the island. In both these towns every species of produce is carried in carts, and the wealthier inhabitants drive in their carriages and gigs. These roads have been made over tracts of swampy ground to the sea coast, but, with little and timely repair, they will last for ever.

The low price of West India produce has compelled the inhabitants of the south coast to think seriously of raising provisions for their negroes, and not to depend entirely on the imports from foreign countries. To accomplish an object of such importance to their prosperity, they have opened roads into the mountains of the interior, where various kinds of grain and roots are raised in abundance. A road, which may be called a carriage road, has been made from Ponce to the village of Adjun-

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tas, situate five leagues in the interior of the mountains, which even in times of drought, and consequent scarcity of provisions on the coast, will always insure an abundant supply. The road along the coast from Ponce to Guayama is tolerably good; from thence to Patillas there is an excellent carriage road for a distance of three leagues; and from the latter place to the coast is a high road well constructed. From Patillas to Faxardo on the eastern coast, passing through the towns of Maimavo, Yubacao, Humacao, and Naguabo, the roads are not calculated for wheel-vehicles, in consequence of being obliged to ascend and descend several steep hills. That which crosses the mountain of Mala Pascua, dividing the north and east coasts, is a good and solid road, upon which a person on horseback may travel with great ease and safety. The magistrates of these towns are actively employed in forming substantial roads, where the nature of the country requires: for example, the road crossing the beautiful valley of Yubacao, which consists of a very soft and humid soil, requires more attention than the mountain of Mala Pascua, which has a fine sandy soil. From Faxardo to the capital, through the towns of Luguillo, Loisa, and Rio Piedras, the road is tolerably good for persons on horseback as far as Rio Piedras; and from thence to the city of San Juan, a distance of two leagues, is an excellent carriage road, made by the order, and under the inspection of the captain-general,—part of it through a mangrove swamp, for a model, and to excite a spirit of emulation in the people. Over the river Loisa a magnificent wooden bridge has been built; and on the road near Rio Piedras is a handsome stone bridge over a deep rivulet. From thence to the capital two excellent stone bridges have been constructed with piers and abutments; the one over the branch of salt water which runs from the lagoon of Cangrejos and falls

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into the harbour of San Juan; the other over a branch of the sea which also joins the harbour of the capital, communicating with the sea to the north, and forming the island on which the capital stands. At the head of this last bridge a redoubt has been formed.

Roads to every part of the interior are making with astonishing rapidity. From the town of Papino, situate in the mountains, to the town of Aguadilla on the coast, distant five and a half leagues, through the village of La Moca, is one of the best roads in the island; which, in the distance of three leagues from the latter place, is crossed by ten deep mountain rivulets, formerly impassable, but over which solid bridges have now been built, with side railings. In this mountainous district, in the circumference of a few leagues, no less than 47 bridges have been built to facilitate the communication between one place and another. Were a person who left this island a few years ago to return, he would scarcely credit the immense improvement in roads and bridges. One hundred and thirty wooden bridges, over rivers and brooks, have been constructed within the last six years, some of which would be an ornament even in Europe: their utility is too obvious to require comment. These improvements are doubly satisfactory, as they have been effected by the labour of the inhabitants, who have a deep interest in preserving them as one of the principal sources of their wealth.*

The only roads in the island which are not now in a

* "The means of communication," says a judicious writer, "favour production precisely in the same way as machines that multiply the produce of our manufactories and facilitate their production; which is exactly equivalent to a greater produce obtained with the same expense. This calculation, applied to the immense quantity of merchandise which covers the roads of a populous and rich empire, from the vegetables which are carried to market to the productions of every point of the globe, which disembarking at the ports are dispersed over

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fair state of repair, are some of those in the interior. On the whole it may be asserted that the roads of Puerto Rico are generally good, and some of them excellent. The inhabitants of every part of the island begin to feel the beneficial effects arising from them, without the expense pressing hard on any part of the community. Besides the incalculable advantages accruing to individuals, and the general prosperity, Government can have information by express from the furthest extremity of the island in less than twelve hours.

In the course of three or four years, I am persuaded that one will be able to travel round the island, and through the interior of it, in a carriage, with the greatest facility; for the inhabitants, convinced that their prosperity in a great measure depends on good roads, zealously second the wise views of Government.

HARBOURS.—The whole line of coast of this island is indented with harbours, bays, and creeks, where ships of the heaviest burthen may come to anchor. On the north coast, during the months of November, December, and January, when the wind blows with violence from the east and north-east, the anchorage is dangerous in all the bays and harbours of that coast, except in the port of San Juan, the capital of the island. Vessels are often obliged to put to sea on the menacing aspect of the heavens at this season, to avoid being driven on shore by the heavy squalls and the rolling waves of a boisterous sea, which propel them to destruction. During the remaining

the continent—this calculation, could it be executed, would give for result an economy almost inestimable in the expense of production. The facility of communication is equivalent to the natural and gratuitous riches which are found in a production, when this facility happens with respect to productions which must be altogether abandoned or lost were it not for the advantage of roads and bridges."

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months the ports on this coast are safe and commodious, unless when visited by a hurricane, against whose fury no port can offer a shelter, nor any vessel be secure. The excellent port of San Juan is perfectly sheltered from the effects of the north wind. The hill upon which the town of that name and the fortifications which defend it are built, protects the vessels anchored in the harbour. The entrance of this port is narrow, and requires a pilot; for the canal which leads to the anchorage, although deep enough for vessels of any dimensions, is very narrow, which exposes them to run aground. But ships of the line may enter this port; and only a few years ago vessels of this class have anchored in the bay; but, in consequence of its not having been cleared for many years, the canal becomes every day narrower (though it has not diminished in depth) from the accumulation of sand brought down by the rivers which empty themselves into the harbour. The dust and rubbish from the town washed down by the rains, and the heavy sea rolling into the port during the continuance of the north winds, also contribute to choke up this harbour. If immediate attention be not given to the cleaning of it, in a few years it will become a task of great difficulty; and one of the finest ports in the West Indies will scarcely have water for a vessel of two hundred tons. The present commandant of marine, Don J. Topete, ever zealous in the public service, has taken measures for purchasing a machine for this purpose; and I hope that an enterprise of such imperious necessity may be carried into effect. This port is several miles in extent, and has the advantage of having deep canals to the east, among a wood of mangrove trees, where vessels are perfectly secure during the hurricane months. Vessels of two hundred and fifty tons can at present unload and take in their

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cargoes at the wharf. There is an arsenal here, well stocked with every material necessary for vessels of war.

On the eastern coast, the spacious bay of Aguadilla is formed by cape Borrigua and cape St. Francisco. When the N. N. E. and S. E. winds prevail, it is not a safe anchorage for ships. A heavy surf, rolling on the shore, obliges vessels to seek safety by putting to sea on the appearance of a north wind. However, this place has always been the rendezvous for vessels trading to the Havannah and gulf of Mexico, in consequence of being able to obtain refreshments, and, with little trouble, a supply of good water. The Aguadilla is memorable for being the first place where Columbus landed in this island.

Mayagues is also an open roadstead on the west coast, formed by two projecting capes. It has good anchorage for vessels of a large size, and is well sheltered from the north winds. The port of Cabo Rojo has also good anchorage. It is situated to the s. $\frac{1}{4}$ w. of the point of Gunajico, at a distance of five miles and a half. Its shape is nearly circular, and its extent from E. to W. three-quarters of a mile. At the entrance it has three fathoms water, and sixteen feet in the middle of the harbour. The entrance is a narrow canal.

The south coast abounds in bays and harbours; but those which deserve particular attention are the deserted port of Guanica, and the port of Hobos, near Guayma. In the port of Guanica, vessels drawing twenty-one feet of water may enter with perfect safety. Its entrance is about a hundred yards wide; and it forms a spacious basin, completely land-locked: the vessels may anchor close to the shore. It has, in the whole extent, from six fathoms and a half to three fathoms, the latter depth being found in the exterior of the port. The entrance

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is commanded by two small hills on either side, which, if mounted with a few pieces of artillery, would defy a squadron to force it. This port would be of immense advantage in time of war: the national vessels and coasters would thus have a secure retreat from an enemy's cruisers on the south coast; while on the north coast they would be effectually protected in the harbour of the capital by the formidable batteries of the city of San Juan. This is a matter of important consideration, as the commerce of this island daily increases, and the other ports, being open roads, are exposed to the depredations of privateers and pirates.

The port of Jovos, near Guayma, on the south coast, is a haven of considerable importance. Vessels of the largest class may anchor, and ride in safety from the winds; and the whole British navy would find room in its spacious bosom. It has four fathoms water in the shallowest part of the entrance: however, it is difficult to enter this port from June to November, as the sea breaks with violence at the entrance, on account of the southerly winds which reign at that season. It has every convenience of situation and locality for forming docks for the repair of shipping. It could, with little cost, be made defensible. If at any future day the government of Spain should turn its attention to the commerce of these seas, this port will rise in importance, and be of great national utility. Its situation, contiguous to the agricultural district of Guayma, will always make it be resorted to by vessels of all nations. The port of Arecibo is very little frequented, being exposed to the north winds; but the large bay of Anasco, on the south coast, affords anchorage to vessels of all sizes; it is also safe from the north winds.

Although, on the eastern coast, there are many places

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for vessels to anchor, yet none of them are exempt from danger during the north winds, except Fajardo, where a safe anchorage is to be found to leeward of two little islands close to the bay, by which vessels are completely sheltered. However, were there no other ports in this island than San Juan on the north coast, and Hobos and Guanica on the south, these would answer all the purposes of commerce and navigation; and I believe I do not hazard an erroneous opinion when I say, that were every port in the island but these closed up by a bar of rocks, the revenue would be considerably augmented; for the number of landing-places on the coast of this island makes it difficult to eradicate the contraband trade, which has existed since the remotest periods of its history.

The island of Bieques, situated on the N. E. of Puerto Rico, only three leagues from the coast of Faxardo, has also several commodious ports and harbours where vessels of the largest size may ride at anchor. The importance of this island must be obvious to whoever considers its position relative to Puerto Rico. It lies to windward of the coast: consequently it must always form a part of the government of Puerto Rico. Were I permitted to offer an opinion with respect to this subject, I would pronounce decidedly, that the island of Bieques in the hands of any other nation would be a source of incalculable injury to Puerto Rico. In time of peace, it would be the refuge of malefactors, and a nest for contraband traffic, which, from its position, could be carried on with impunity: boats during the night could run down on the coasts, and, in the numerous creeks by which it is indented, find a safe place of deposit for their goods. I make these observations, because I am convinced that the occupation of Bieques by a foreign power would be incompatible with the security and pros-

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perity of this island, and that the nation that governs Puerto Rico must also wave its flag over its natural and inalienable dependencies. I trust that this question may terminate soon, as it ought in regard to justice, in favour of Spain, and that its colonization may not suffer any further interruption from the delay of diplomatic forms.

Towns.—Fifty-eight towns and villages are distributed over the island, which makes nearly one to every six square leagues. Ascending the hills which separate the different valleys of the island from each other, the traveller is continually and agreeably surprised by the sudden appearance of the white walls of a church glittering in the valley beneath him, surrounded by wooden houses, generally thatched with shingles or the leaf of the palm tree, which, not being painted or whitened, look dark and sombre, and form a striking contrast with the dazzling whiteness of the church. Sometimes three or four towns are discernible from one eminence.

The largest town in the island is that of San Juan, the capital. It contained in 1828, 800 stone and brick houses, besides some wooden houses and cabins in the suburbs and outside the walls. The houses of the capital have generally flat roofs, in order to collect the rain water for the cisterns with which every house is provided. They serve also as a place of recreation for the ladies, who seldom walk out, to enjoy the refreshing breeze of evening. Most of the houses consist of two stories. The poorer white people and persons of co'our reside on the ground floors; and it is not an uncommon thing to see a whole family living in a single room, without any other means of ventilation than the door; and here they sleep, cook, and live. The houses are mostly built in the ancient fashion, without much regard to taste

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or convenience; but many new houses have been built in a more modern style. Twenty years ago, the greater part of the city was built of wood; at present, unless in the suburbs, not a wooden house is to be seen. The first coup d'œil of San Juan, surrounded by walls and fortifications, with its flat houses and painted balconies, has much the appearance of Cadiz in miniature; insomuch, that one might almost for a moment imagine oneself in that famous emporium, were it not for the numerous sable faces of the negro population, and the black children in a state of perfect nudity running up and down the streets.

The situation of the town is excellent. It is built on the slope of a small hill: the streets, which run parallel and cross each other at right angles, are perfectly straight, and run down to the side of the bay. It is enclosed on every part by strong fortifications, which render the place almost impregnable. On the whole, it may be considered one of the best, and certainly the healthiest town in the West Indies. When the streets are repaired, (which, with the exception of one or two, are at present in a very bad state,) a lady with thin shoes may traverse them after a heavy shower of rain without wetting her feet. The dirt being washed down by the rain, and carried by a sewer into the harbour, this town is kept free from that accumulation of filth which is seen so frequently in the streets of the towns in other islands, creating a horrible stench, which unquestionably augments not a little the unhealthiness of the climate.

This city is adorned by some useful public edifices and institutions. A very handsome theatre has been built at the public expense. When finished, its architecture, painting, and ornaments, will cost upwards of 200,000 dollars; and it would most certainly do credit to a second rate city of Europe. The square in which it is built is

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surrounded by seats of cut stone, and adorned by walks on three sides of it, (the theatre occupying the fourth,) with double rows of almond trees, which form a delightful and shady promenade for the inhabitants, who had previously no public walk. When lighted up at night by numerous lamps affixed to pillars, and the band of the garrison playing, it affords a delightful promenade to those who have been confined all day by the duties of their callings.

The seminary for the education of the clergy, erected by the zeal and indefatigable exertions of the present bishop, is contiguous to the episcopal palace. It is built in a modern, chaste style of architecture. It is two stories high in the back parts, where the nature of the ground allows it. There are funds for the maintenance of the professors, and it is nearly finished. This is an establishment of great public utility, and does infinite honour to its worthy, venerable, and virtuous founder. The greatest advantages may be expected to result from an institution which, under the eye of the prelate, will be the nursery of a well-educated and virtuous clergy, who, by propagating useful knowledge, and by the force of good example, will correct the vices of the lower classes. The money thus expended may be considered as a productive capital; for it teaches the ignorant countryman his duty to God, his king, and his country, and inculcates the maxims of honesty and industry.

The royal military hospital is a large stone edifice. It is well situated on the hill at the top of the town, and to leeward of it, and commands an extensive view of the sea to the north of the bay and the surrounding country to the south. At present it may contain beds for 350 persons; but they are now building in addition two large saloons for the sick ward. From four to twelve poor persons are daily admitted and taken care of, gratis, besides

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the soldiers of the garrison. This hospital is attended by a physician, two surgeons, and several hospital mates. It has an apothecary's shop and laboratory within itself. It is under the immediate inspection of the intendant, and is internally governed by a comptroller, who receives a salary of $1000 yearly, and a major domo; both of whom give in their accounts to the intendant for his approval. The sick are carefully attended to with respect to food, care, and cleanliness.

The hospital de la Concésion is an establishment for females, with thirty beds. The governor defrays the expenses of four beds, and four more for soldiers. It is internally governed by the chaplain, and is attended by a physician and a surgeon. It appears to be in a good state, and every attention is paid to the sick.

The Government-house, called the fortress of Santa Catalina, has stood for upwards of 200 years; and, as it was originally designed for strength and not for beauty, it has a most sombre appearance, having more the aspect of a prison than a palace. It has, however, some spacious saloons, and is not destitute of convenience. The offices of the intendant and secretary, and the treasury, are within its walls. Many additions and improvements have been made to it by different governors. The east wing, which is the secretary's and registrar's office, was built in 1800, and contains a spacious suite of apartments, well adapted for the purposes intended. There is a chapel for the governor to hear mass underneath, communicating by a staircase with the interior of the palace. A piece of land enclosed for a garden is attached to it, but the north wind, to which it is exposed, destroys the trees and prevents vegetation. It has also stables, and a large cistern.

The royal gaol is a large stone edifice, built only a few years ago: it measures twenty-three yards in front, and

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seventy-eight in the rear. It is two stories high, and has three yards. The debtors and criminals are confined under the same roof, without any of the comforts or distinctions necessary between the wretch who commits an act of premeditated murder, and the unfortunate man who may have been ruined by a law-suit or a fraud. For the sake of humanity it were to be wished that all countries would imitate the United States in the classification of criminals, and in their punishments. But I shall advert to this important point hereafter.

The prisoners are maintained by a duty on the cattle killed in the capital, and receive a competent daily allowance.

The house of correction is a large old building, forming one side of the principal square. Here male offenders for crimes of a political or civil nature are confined for the term of years specified in their sentence. They are obliged to labour at the fortifications and other public works. The greater part of them are soldiers who have been condemned for desertion, and malefactors from the Havannah and the Peninsula. It is contemplated by government to build a house of correction outside the walls. This is loudly called for; for the public morals receive little benefit from the continual view of these men, morning and evening dragging their chains through the streets.

There are three convents within the walls of the city,—one of the order of St. Francis, another of St. Dominic, and the third a convent of Carmelite nuns. They are maintained by the rents which they possess. These convents are spacious, commodious, and well situate; but they are now occupied only by friars, and are nearly empty; and many parts of the buildings are in ruins.

The first house, built in 1525, and inhabited by the

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first governor of the island, Don Ponce de Leon, still exists. It is called the White House. It is built on the side of a hill, which is cut, and strengthened with stone abutments and a stockade. It is preserved with great care, by order of government, as a venerable piece of antiquity. It appears to have been built for the purpose of resisting a sudden attack; and, even at the present day, it could present a formidable resistance to an armed body unprovided with artillery. It is now the workshop for the engineer department, which attends to its preservation.

The town-house is a very handsome building, situated in the market square. It has a magnificent hall, decorated with the king's portrait and that of the governor, as large as life. It is here the Cabilda, over which presides the captain-general, deliberates. Public balls are also given in this hall on extraordinary occasions,—such as the king or queen's birth-day.

A shambles for slaughtering and selling butcher-meat, is an edifice which has also been lately built, and is of great public utility; but I am sorry to say that little attention is paid to the manner of killing the cattle, which is of such importance to render the meat good. At St. Thomas, which is supplied from hence with cattle, from the manner of killing only, better beef is commonly eaten than in this island.

A society, called the Economical Society, is established for promoting the fine arts. It is conducted by persons of talent and intelligence. It has had the good effect of stimulating to exertion the youth of both sexes. A professor in painting attends every night, and gives instruction to the boys who are admitted, gratis. This institution has produced many young men who have made con-

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siderable proficiency in this art. Examinations are held once a year.

There is also a class of mathematics, where the commandant of engineers attends, and gives instruction to a certain number of youths.

Two schools for boys, and one for girls, are paid for by the municipality.

The arsenal is a large space of land enclosed with a stone wall, outside the walls near the wharf, with stores, offices, workshops for constructing vessels, quarters for the workmen and the troops, and a guard-house. A wharf has been constructed, and a machine for embarking and debarking cannon. A few years ago, the land on which this arsenal now stands was a mangrove swamp, which was highly injurious to the health of the city; for the land breeze, which sets in every evening and lasts till morning, blowing from the south, could not fail to waft to the town its deadly miasma, so prejudicial to human life in tropical climates. Were it not that it would weaken the defence of the place, by allowing an attacking enemy ground on which to construct batteries for assailing the fortress on the land side, great benefit would no doubt arise from cutting down the mangrove trees to the east of the town, and draining the swamp on which they grow.

The custom-house was built in 1826. It is most conveniently situated outside the walls, near the wharf. It is not large enough for a deposit of goods, but a new one for this purpose is about to be erected near it, which, I trust, will fully meet the object intended.

The cathedral is a large mass of building, which has never been finished. There are four churches and two chapels in the city. The episcopal palace is a commo-

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dious building; it was originally a private house purchased from its owner: the ecclesiastical tribunal and secretary reside there.

I have thus endeavoured to point out to the foreigner the principal public buildings and institutions of the capital of Puerto Rico. On the whole, the town of San Juan may be considered one of the best in the West Indies; and when the streets shall be newly paved and flagged, as is projected, it will be rendered still more neat and agreeable.

Some of the provincial towns may be considered large, with reference to the extent of the island; such as Mayagues and Aguadilla on the west coast, Ponce on the south, Pepino and Cayey in the interior, and Humacao on the eastern coast. The other towns and villages, with few exceptions, are merely skeletons—containing a large square, with the church, the houses of the curate and magistrate, the militia quarters, and the lodgings of some of the more wealthy farmers, who build houses to stop at on sundays and holidays, when they come to town with their families. Besides these, a few cabins thatched with the leaf of the palm tree, arranged in streets,—a few shops,—sometimes a miserable billiard-room, and that never-failing source of amusement to the natives, a cock-pit,—may represent to the reader the extent and appearance of the villages. Of their general population some idea may be formed by referring to the statistical account of 1828, in which it is estimated that there were only 3111 houses and 2392 cabins in all the towns of the island, including the capital; while in the country there were 13,548 houses, and 20,846 cabins. But since that period great numbers of new houses have been erected. I have seen some villages in which whole streets had been recently built; and in every town and

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village houses were building. With the exception of those of the capital almost all the houses are of wood, both in town and country. It is to be regretted that in the large towns of Ponce and Mayagues, the merchants do not build brick or stone houses, where so much valuable property is continually endangered in wooden stores. The example of the dreadful conflagration which has recently covered the neighbouring island of St. Thomas with ashes, should, I think, operate as a warning. Many wooden houses in this island have cost upwards of 14,000 dollars in their construction, which is a capital exposed every moment to perish by the smallest accident, —while those built of brick or stone form a solid capital that may last more than a century.

CLIMATE.—Although one would suppose that all the large islands in the tropics enjoyed the same climate, yet from the greater mortality observed in Jamaica, St. Domingo, and Cuba, compared with Puerto Rico, I am inclined to believe that this latter island is much more congenial than either of those to the health of Europeans. The heat, the rains, the seasons, are with very trifling variations the same in all. But the number of mountains and running streams which are every where in view in Puerto Rico, the absence of stagnant water, and the general cultivation of the land, may powerfully contribute to purify the atmosphere, and render it salubrious to man. The only difference of temperature to be observed throughout the whole island, is between the valleys and the mountains, which happens in every country under the influence of the tropics.

In the mountains the inhabitants enjoy the coolness of spring, while the valleys, were it not for the daily breeze which blows generally from the north-east and

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east, would be uninhabitable. For example, in Ponce the noon-day sun is felt in all its rigour, while at four leagues distance, at the village of Adjuntas in the interior of the mountains, the traveller feels invigorated by the refreshing breezes of a temperate clime. At one place the thermometer is as high as ninety, while in another it is sometimes under sixty. Therefore, the convalescent European can always in a few hours enjoy a change of climate, when his interest or convenience does not allow him to go to Europe. Although the changes of the seasons are not so distinctly marked in this climate as they are in Europe, (the trees being always green,) yet there is a distinction to be made between them, besides the two great divisions of the year which are commonly made in the West Indies by calling them the wet and the dry seasons,—the former the winter, the latter the summer. Nor does this distinction give a proper idea of the seasons in this island; for on the north coast it sometimes rains almost the whole year, while on the south coast not a drop of rain falls, sometimes, for twelve or fourteen months successively, and while in the mountains there are daily showers. Last year, for example, in the months of November, December, and January, the north winds blew with violence, accompanied by heavy showers of rain, while this year (1832) in the same months, it has scarcely blown a whole day from that point of the compass, nor has it rained for a whole month. Therefore, the climate of the north and south coasts of this island, although under the same tropical influence, are essentially different. Under this consideration, I shall confine my description of climate more particularly to the north coast, on which I have personally resided.

In the month of May the rains commence, not with the fury of a deluge, as in the months of August and September, but heavier than any rain experienced in Europe.

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Peals of thunder reverberating through the mountains give a warning of their approach, and the sun breaking through the clouds, promotes with his vivifying heat the prolific vegetation of the fields. The heat at this season is equal to the summer of Europe; the nights are cool and pleasant; but the dews are heavy and pernicious to health. The following meteorological observations, made with exactness by a captain of the Spanish navy, Don Josè M^{a} Vertèz, will exhibit the average range of the thermometer of Fahrenheit:—

Degrees of Heat observed in the Capital of Puerto Rico, taking a medium of five years.

Hours of the day	Jan.	Feb.	March	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Seven in the Morning.	72	72½	74	78	78	82	85	86	80½	77	75	75
Noon. .	82	81	82	83	85	86	90	92	88	85	84	80
Five in the Evening.	78	74	78	80	81	84	87	90	83	82	80	79

The weather, after a continuance of fifteen or twenty days' rain, clears up. The sun, whose heat had been hitherto moderated by partial clouds and showers of rain, seems as it were set in a cloudless sky. The cattle in the pastures look for the shade of the trees; a perfect calm pervades the whole face of nature, in the morning from sun-rise, till between ten and eleven o'clock, when the sea breeze sets in. The leaves of the trees seem as if afraid to move; the sea, without a wave or a ruffle on its vast expanse, appears like an immense mirror. The human body partakes in the general languor as well as the vegetable and brute creation. I am not surprised, that at a remote period, when the lights of science had not explained the secrets of nature, St. Augustin should

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have considered it heresy to suppose that these regions could be the abode of man; for, were it not for the sea breeze, they would be parched and burning deserts, inhabited only by reptiles.

The nights, although warm, are delightfully clear and serene at this season. The heavens, studded with stars, supply the brilliancy of the moon, and the moon, by the clear light which she reflects on the earth, supplies in her turn the absence of the sun; objects may be clearly distinguished at the distance of several hundred yards, so that one may even shoot by moonlight. The months of June and July offer very little variation in the weather, or in the range of the thermometer. In August a suffocating heat reigns throughout the day, and at night in vain do we seek for coolness; a faint zephyr is succeeded by a calm of several hours. The atmosphere is heavy and oppressive; the body, weakened by perspiration, becomes languid; the appetite fails; the musquitoes, buzzing about the ears by day and night, perplex and annoy by their stings; while the fevers of the tropics attack Europeans with sudden and irresistible violence. This is the most sickly season for the European. The thermometer frequently exceeds 90°. The clouds exhibit a menacing appearance, portending the approach of the heavy autumnal rains, which pour down like a deluge. About the middle of September it appears as if all the vapours of the ocean had accumulated in one point of the heavens. The rain comes down like an immense quantity of water poured through a sieve; it excludes from the view every surrounding object; and in half an hour the whole surface of the earth becomes an immense sheet of water. The rivers are swollen, and overflow their banks, the low lands are completely inundated, and the smallest brooks become deep and rapid torrents. By an exact

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account which was kept of the perpendicular height of the water which fell in one year in Barbadoes (and that a moderate year of rain), where it rains less than in Puerto Rico, it appears to have been equal to sixty-seven cubical inches.

The hurricanes, which are so justly dreaded by the inhabitants of the West Indies, having so often in a few hours left them houseless and destitute, generally happen between the months of July and October, seldom coming on before or after these periods. The dreadful one which desolated this island in 1825, took place on the 27th of July, and that which ravaged the island of Barbadoes last year (1831), happened on the night of the 17th of August. A hurricane is not preceded by any phenomena by which its approach might be known and guarded against. It commences like every other tempest; the barometer falls in the same way in both cases; and there is no certain means of knowing that it is a hurricane, until it rushes on with impetuous violence, veering to every point at intervals; or, at once blowing like a whirlwind from every point of the compass, it roots up the stoutest trees of the forest, unroofs the houses, and shakes them from their very foundations; whirling into the air with impetuous violence the trunks and branches of gigantic trees, the beams and covering of houses, and every thing that is within its reach; and leaving, in a few hours, cultivated fields, and buildings, with the value of which the owners had hoped to retire in peace to Europe, a heap of shapeless ruins in the midst of a desert.

This dreadful scourge, which often visits the West Indies, may be considered as a great drawback on the planter, and is a great deduction from the value of West India property.

In the month of October the weather becomes sensibly

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cooler than during the preceding months; and in November, the N. and N.E. winds generally set in, diffusing an agreeable coolness through the surrounding atmosphere. The body becomes braced and active, and the convalescent feels its genial influence. The north wind is accompanied (with few exceptions) by heavy showers of rain on the north coast; and the sea rolls on that coast with tempestuous violence, while the south coast remains perfectly calm: this renders the harbours of the north coast, at this season, with the exception of that of San Juan, dangerous for ships, both from the severe gusts of wind and the heavy sea.

When the fury of the north wind abates, it is succeeded by fine weather and a clear sky. Nothing can exceed the climate of Puerto Rico at this season; I can only compare it to the month of May in the delightful province of Andalusia, where the cold of winter and the burning heat of summer are tempered by the cool freshness of spring. This is considered to be the healthiest season of the year, when a European may visit the tropics without fear. While in Europe, the cold at this season paralyzes nature, and benumbs the very faculties of man, the native of Puerto Rico enjoys the happiest season of his native climate.

The small islands, destitute of wood and high mountains, which have a powerful effect in attracting the clouds, suffer much from drought. It sometimes happens that in Curaçao, St. Bartholomew's, and other islands, they are whole years without a drop of rain, and after exhausting their cisterns, the inhabitants are compelled to import water from the rivers of other islands. It is therefore to be hoped, that the inhabitants of Puerto Rico will not be eager to cut down the forests which cover

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the high mountains of Luguillo; for experience has proved that in the warm regions, where there are no trees, there are no agents in the atmosphere to attract the clouds, and consequently the rivers must gradually diminish as the natural means of replenishing their fountains disappear.

The land breeze, which sets in at night in the large islands of the West Indies, has been very accurately described by Bryan Edwards:—"The land breeze," says that writer, "is an advantage which the large islands derive from the inequality of their surface; for as soon as the sea breeze dies away, the hot air of the valleys being rarified, ascends towards the tops of the mountains, and is there condensed by cold, which makes it specifically heavier than it was before; it then descends back to the valleys on both sides of the ridge. Hence a night wind is felt in all the mountainous countries under the torrid zone; blowing on all sides from the land towards the shore, so that on the north shore, the wind shall come from the south, and on the south shore from the north. Agreeably to this hypothesis, it is observable in the islands to windward, where there are no mountains, that there is no land breeze."

In all warm climates where the land is covered with wood, which impedes the free circulation of the air, and where stagnant water sends forth its pestilential exhalations, human life must be shortened. Since the land in this island has been cleared of wood, and the swampy tracts on the coast drained and cultivated, it has become one of the healthiest places in the West Indies. But we must still expect to find in a climate where heat and moisture combine, some of the most formidable maladies which have made the West India islands so much and so justly dreaded by Europeans. The number of people above

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the age of 40 who are living in this island, however, prove its comparative salubrity.

Almost every other island in the West Indies is infested by snakes and other noxious reptiles. The heat of the climate seems to make their poison more subtle, and their bite mortal—while Providence has favoured Puerto Rico in a most extraordinary manner. There are no venomous snakes or reptiles, no beast of prey, no noxious bird, or insect, to inspire the labourer with apprehension —he may sleep in peace and security in the midst of the forests, by the side of the rivers, or in the meadow with his cattle—neither the birds of the air, nor crawling reptiles, endanger his repose. Puerto Rico also bears no resemblance to the other islands with respect to birds and other animals. There are no indigenous quadrupeds, and scarcely any of the feathered tribe are to be found in the forests. The birds are few both in number and species; you may travel whole leagues without seeing a bird, or even hearing their chirp. On the rivers there are a few water fowl, and in the forests the green parrot. There are neither monkeys nor rabbits, nor any of the innumerable classes of quadrupeds and birds to be found in the immense forests of South America. But rats of an enormous size, and in great numbers, infest the country, and sometimes commit dreadful ravages in the sugar canes; and, although continually persecuted, their numbers do not decrease.

Leaving to the investigation of the philosopher the causes why this beautiful island should have such a scarcity of indigenous animals, I shall endeavour to show the effects of the climate on the constitution of Europeans. My object is to be useful, and I therefore point out the best means which experience in the West Indies has suggested, of preserving the soldier from its direful effects.

The Spanish soldier suffers less, and the British soldier

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more, from the effects of the West India climate, than those of any other nation. This may partly be attributed to the climate of Spain being warmer than that of England, and partly to the habitual abstinence of the Spanish soldier, who consumes little animal food, while the British soldier receives a large allowance of animal food and spirituous liquors. It is calculated that the French lose 15 per cent. of their troops in the West Indies, and the British a still greater number. I recollect to have seen an English regiment of 1200 strong, which, in the course of the three autumnal months, lost 500 men in Jamaica, notwithstanding all the care and attention with which the British troops are attended to in the hospitals; and the average deaths of the British troops in the island of Trinidad, on an average of five years, was 37 per cent. according to the government returns.

I here present a statement of the number of deaths that took place during a period of sixteen years in the regiment of Granada, which garrisoned the fortress of Puerto Rico during that period, and gave detachments to several parts of the island considered very unhealthy from their marshy situations.

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An official Statement of the number of Officers, non-commissioned Officers, and Soldiers, belonging to the Regiment of Infantry of Granada (composed entirely of Europeans), who died, from June 1816 *to Sept.* 1831, *inclusive, in the Garrison of Puerto Rico.*

The effective force which the regiment had each month is stated with the monthly deaths. The number of the troops each month varies considerably, in consequence of the draughts taken for the army of operation in South America, and the recruits that arrived from Spain.

Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths. Lieut. Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
1816.	June	664					2
	July	1115		1		1	
	August	1105					5
	Sept.	1080				1	4
	October	1071				1	2
	Novem.	621					3
	Decem.	610			1		1
1817.	January	614					3
	February	586					2
	March	578					2
	April	573					1
	May	569					1
	June	574					1
	July	571					1
	August	568					
	Septem.	566					1
	October	548					2
	Novem.	557					9
	Decem.	545					
1818.	January	542					2
	February	539					3
	March	534					1
	April	533					2
	May	527					1
	June	525					1
	July	524					
	August	520					
	Septem.	510					1
	October	508					1
	Novem.	495					2
	Decem.	485					2
	Carried over		1	1	3	56	

Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths. Lieut.-Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
	Brought over			1	1	3	56
1819.	January	480					
	February	476					
	March	476					
	April	458					1
	May	464					1
	June	463					
	July	462					
	August	460					1
	Septem.	456					3
	October	454					3
	Novem.	451					1
	Decem.	450					
1820.	January	448					
	February	448					3
	March	445					
	April	449					
	May	420					1
	June	439					2
	July	432					
	August	420					2
	Septem.	418					
	October	418					
	Novem.	414					
	Decem.	414					
1821.	January	412					1
	February	411	1				1
	March	409					1
	April	302					
	May	290					
	June	287					
	Carried over		1	1	1	3	77

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Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths.				
			Lieut.-Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
	Brought over		1	1	1	3	77
1821.	July	287					
	August	286					
	September	283					3
	October	271					4
	November	266					9
	December	265					
1822.	January	260					
	February	256					
	March	246					
	April	249					
	May	247					
	June	241					
	July	241					
	August	238					
	September	231					1
	October	233		1			2
	November	230					1
	December	221					1
1823.	January	211					
	February	209					
	March	208					1
	April	203					2
	May	547			1		6
	June	546					
	July	542					
	August	543			1		2
	September	552					3
	October	543					1
	November	542					
	December	543					1
1824.	January	538					2
	February	543					
	March	549					5
	April	546					1
	May	548					3
	June	544					1
	July	552					1
	August	547					4
	September	549					1
	October	550					2
	November	548					1
	December	549					4
1825.	January	542					2
	February	544					3
	March	541					3
	Carried over		1	2	3	3	147

Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths.				
			Lieut.-Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
	Brought over		1	2	3	3	147
1825.	April	736					3
	May	736		1			3
	June	737					2
	July	736					5
	August	730					1
	September	727					1
	October	729					8
	November	719					9
	December	1718					12
1826.	January	1607					4
	February	1490					11
	March	1478					6
	April	1469					4
	May	1472					21
	June	1514					4
	July	1519					3
	August	1422					14
	September	1407					11
	October	1499					12
	November	1483					9
	December	1474				1	13
1827.	January	1463					13
	February	1447			1		10
	March	1422					7
	April	1421					3
	May	1419					6
	June	1399					3
	July	1394	1	1		1	11
	August	1420					26
	September	1494		1	2	1	20
	October	1470					14
	November	1464					20
	December	1440					16
1828.	January	1442					7
	February	1448					6
	March	1401			1		5
	April	1483					3
	May	1475					5
	June	1467					11
	July	1443				1	2
	August	1447					5
	September	1441					9
	October	1434					4
	November	1426					7
	December	1411					9
	Carried over		2	5	7	7	525

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Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths. Lieut.-Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
	Brought over		2	5	7	7	525
1829.	January	1400					7
	February	1398					7
	March	1389					7
	April	1381		1			1
	May	1383					5
	June	1376					11
	July	1364					5
	August	1353					8
	September	1345					8
	October	1337					13
	November	1321					10
	December	1310					7
1830.	January	1300					7
	February	1292					7
	March	1300					7
	April	1296					5
	May	1279				1	2
	June	1274					4
	July	1289					5
	Carried over		2	6	7	8	651

Years.	Months.	Effective force present each month.	Number of Deaths. Lieut.-Colonels.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants, and rank and file.
	Brought over		2	6	7	8	651
1830.	August	1290					8
	September	1202					4
	October	1263					5
	November	1267	1				4
	December	1248				1	6
1831.	January	1236					2
	February	1233			1		1
	March	1228					3
	April	1223					6
	May	1204					3
	June	1213					1
	July	1214					1
	August	1228					1
	September	1229					3
	Total of deaths from June 1816 to Sept. 1831 inclusive . .		3	6	8	9	699

Taken from returns made to Government by the Colonels commanding the Regiment of Granada at different periods.

Longevity among the natives of the island is a thing of common occurrence. Many of them live to the advanced ages of eighty, ninety, one hundred, and even to one hundred and twenty years. But Europeans seldom reach an advanced age. The climate exerts its ravages upon them in all the forms of disease: most of them die in the prime of life, or premature old age creeps on them before that period. What less could be expected from the influence of a climate which in a short time

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corrodes iron, and reduces the texture of paper to powder? The human frame that has not been seasoned to it from infancy cannot resist its powerful effects. There is no doubt that intemperance ruins health quicker and with more unerring certainty than in Europe; but the greatest temperance and precaution are not sufficient to guard the stranger from its ravages. Excessive heat and moisture combined, at the same time that they most essentially contribute to the fertility of the soil, develope the germs of dire disease; the dews of night, heavier than a European shower, are extremely pernicious to health. Fevers, dysenteries, dropsies, and a bowel complaint which is called by physicians scorbutic diarrhœa, attack all classes, but particularly Europeans. When once this fearful disease has seized on a European, there is no alternative between leaving the country and perishing. This is a disease which has become very common, and which has hitherto baffled the skill of science.

As it is of the utmost importance that the government should always keep up a healthy and effective body of troops in a distant colony, too much care cannot be taken to preserve them in health and vigour. Any extraordinary expense necessary to attain this object, is in the end a saving to government; besides, it is only an act of justice and humanity towards those brave men who are destined to protect the lives and properties of the inhabitants and to support the national honour in the day of danger. What exertion can be expected from soldiers worn out with incessant fatigue, and with disease brought on from the want of proper care and attention? I do not mean to say by this that the soldiers of this garrison are not taken care of; they are well clad, well fed and lodged; but there are other attentions that to the superficial

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observer may appear trifling, which are absolutely necessary to preserve the European soldier's health in this climate. It is a well-established fact, that no European soldier stands the West Indian climate equal to the soldier of Spain. The Spanish soldier, temperate, hardy, patient, obedient to command, undergoes fatigue, hunger, and privations without a murmur. He possesses in an eminent degree those innate qualities, which, with discipline, would render him the best soldier in the world, as has been proved both in ancient and modern times. The intrepid General Picton, who fell gloriously at Waterloo, was often heard to say, that with a corps of 20,000 Spaniards, without baggage, he would, in time of war and in the face of an enemy, traverse Europe from one extremity to the other. I do not think it lost time to offer a few hints suggested by long experience in the West Indies, on the best way of preserving the soldiers' health. I may thus stimulate others to offer ideas of improvement on a subject which is interesting to every part of a nation, where national glory so much depends on the soldier's faithful and honourable discharge of his duty. Troops should never be embarked for a tropical climate before the month of October, so that they may arrive at their destination at the end of November or beginning of December, when the north and north-east winds reign, rendering the air cool and salubrious. On the passage out, great care should be taken to keep up a continual ventilation between decks, by wind-sails; and the greatest attention to cleanliness should be observed. At break of day the soldiers should be ordered on deck, where tubs of salt water should be given them to wash their faces, necks, hands, and feet. Their hair should also be close cut. The bedding in dry weather should be exposed on deck every morning, and the spaces between decks well swept

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and fumigated with aromatic vinegar. Nothing but the greatest care and most rigid discipline can prevent infectious diseases where such a number of persons are cooped up together. The food of the troops should be good and wholesome; for contractors too often try, from vile avidity of gain, to impose on government the worst class of provisions, thinking any thing good enough for the soldier; thus defrauding the government of its money, and doing an incalculable evil to the service, by injuring the soldiers' health. Very little salt meat or fish should be given out as rations. The quantity of salt meat given to the British soldiers on board ship, is, in my opinion, one of the causes why so many of them fall victims to the climate on their arrival. Rice, peas, &c. are much better than salted animal food, which disposes the blood to putrescence. Every vessel coming out should be provided with a sufficient quantity of the concrete acid of limes, to prevent scurvy. Sugar should also be liberally dealt out as rations; for the experience of those who have circumnavigated the world has proved that where sugar has been freely given to the sailors, sea scurvy has seldom or never made its appearance; whereas formerly it rendered whole crews useless even on short voyages. I do not approve of the continual use of spirituous liquors aboard, even in small quantities; the use of them leads to quarrels and other mischievous consequences, besides their pernicious effects on health. Medical men of experience and education should always be sent with troops, who should be well paid to make the service worth their attention; and young hospital practitioners, generally very ignorant, should never be entrusted with the important object of the soldier's health. How many thousands of valuable men have been lost to their country by the ignorance of practitioners, who have no further claim to a know-

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ledge of medicine than some superficial practice in the hospitals!

When the troops are disembarked, they should be lodged in airy and spacious quarters, made to get up early, and for the first three months they should not be employed on fatigue duties in the heat of the day, unless there is a great scarcity of men. The soldier should be kept continually employed to prevent vicious habits, so destructive to health and discipline. Exposure to the dews of night is an infallible cause of sickness to new comers. Each soldier should be provided with a cloth cloak, to be worn only when on night duty or in rainy weather; this will prevent the dew and rain from injuring them; the light linen jackets which the soldiers now wear in Puerto Rico being totally insufficient for this purpose. I have seen sentries, wet to the skin both from the rain and dew, return to the guard-room and remain all night in damp clothes, which is a never-failing cause of sickness. Formerly in the island of Jamaica, whose climate is much the same as that of this island, great numbers of British troops were annually carried off from fever and dysentery. Some seasons whole regiments were reduced to skeletons, and the government was put to a great expense in order to replace them. But since the period when every soldier was obliged to wear a flannel waistcoat next the skin, not one-third of the mortality prevails which happened before flannel was used by the troops; which is a proof that these diseases, so fatal to Europeans, generally originate in suppressed perspirations, or from remaining in damp clothes. I understand that the French troops which garrison the islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe have recently adopted this salutary system to prevent disease. I am persuaded that were the Spanish government to command this plan to

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be adopted in regiments serving within the tropics, by this simple method many useful lives would be saved to the nation, and the progress of many diseases would be arrested. Every soldier should be provided with three flannel waistcoats; and officers commanding corps should enforce orders that no soldier should ever neglect continually wearing them. There is another cause which contributes to increase the mortality among the troops in this climate. The soldiers when on duty, overpowered by heat, and not finding a breath of air in the guard-rooms, spread their blankets under the open sky, thereby exposing themselves to the pernicious consequences of the dew: great numbers have lost their sight, and others have brought on incurable diseases by this thoughtless conduct. The want of good and well-ventilated barracks is severely felt in Puerto Rico; troops shut up in the casemates of the fortress, without any other ventilation than the door, must suffer great detriment to their health. It is therefore to be hoped that the government will turn its attention to an object of such paramount importance.

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CHAPTER III.

State of Society—National Prejudices—The Island formerly a Military Post—Aristocracy of Puerto Rico—The Mercantile Classes—Tradesmen and Mechanics—Immigrant Adventurers—Respectable Foreign Settlers—Pettifogging Attorneys—Convict Population—Paucity of Robberies and other Crimes of Violence—Mistaken Notions of Foreigners—Peaceful Character of the Inhabitants—Mode of Travelling—Festival of St. John—Society of the better Classes—Passion for Cock-fighting—Manners of the Xivaros—Habitations of the Wealthy—Cabins of the Xivaros—General Hospitality—Indolence and Courage of the Inhabitants—Appearance and Manners of the Ladies of Puerto Rico—Peculiar Customs—Prejudices respecting Education.

In this chapter I shall endeavour to convey to the reader some idea of the state of society in this island. Without dealing in exaggeration, without flattery or detraction, I shall endeavour to present an unvarnished picture of the manners of the inhabitants, such as they appeared to me. The person who carries into foreign countries national habits and prejudices, will always find abundant room for ridicule and criticism. There is no people on earth who have not some peculiarities in their manners and customs,

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which at first sight appear odd to a stranger. Whoever peruses the satirical pamphlets entitled "Six Weeks in Paris," by an Englishman, and the "Fifteen Days in London," written by a Frenchman in revenge, without being acquainted with the French and English customs, would suppose both of these nations to be ridiculously barbarous and anti-social. A stranger who had never visited Spain or her colonies, on reading the prejudiced and false descriptions given of them by many modern writers, would dread to sleep a single night among the inhabitants. But the writer who honestly aims at furnishing the public with sound and accurate information, should divest himself of all illiberal and narrow prepossessions. He should look on the whole world as his country, and on all mankind as his countrymen.

Rome, the greatest empire of the world, was first peopled by robbers and assassins. It need not therefore appear strange that this island should have received a part of her white inhabitants from the dregs of society, as well as some from the higher classes. This perhaps has happened at the first colonization of almost all countries. It is only by wise laws and institutions, vigorously enforced, that the criminal can be converted into a good subject.

This island was formerly only a military post; and the troops that garrisoned it were stationary. The officers, despairing of returning to Europe, married with the Creole ladies, many of whom, proud of descending from the first conquerors, were considered noble. In this manner the officers, becoming at once soldiers and agriculturists, looked on Puerto Rico as their home; and they and their children form a considerable part of the white population that is this day found here. Many of the most opulent and respectable families descend from them. They look back with pride to their origin, and

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they form an indissoluble link of connexion with the mother country. These and the descendants from the conquerors form what may be called the Puerto Rico aristocracy, and some of them support their pretensions with as much pride as if they were grandees of Spain: even in the midst of poverty they are inexorable in exacting from their inferiors the homage paid to superior rank. The achievements of their great grandfathers are often cited as a title to personal respect.

Merchants, shopkeepers, and all the inferior branches of traders and mechanics, have more or less contributed to the white population. The merchants of this island import and retail their own goods. They are generally composed of the active and industrious Catalans, who, persevering and economical, are much attached to their native customs and native land. They seldom marry, or establish themselves permanently in the colonies. When they have realized a competency, they retire to Europe to enjoy the fruits of their industry, while their place is generally supplied by their young relations, who follow the same occupation and the same line of conduct. They may therefore be considered rather as transient visitors than as a permanent part of the population.

Tradesmen and artizans generally marry and establish themselves permanently. This class of people, such as smiths, carpenters, coopers, &c., are sure of doing well, if they conduct themselves with propriety. I knew two blacksmiths who have made fortunes; and I know an Irish carpenter who a few years ago came to this island with only twenty dollars, and who in the space of five years has become possessed of property to the value of 20,000 dollars, which he acquired by a sedulous attention to his business: such is the rapid accumulation of capital by industry in these countries. The acquisition

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of property raises the blacksmith and the carpenter to a higher rank in society: they become land-proprietors, and consequently associate with the aristocracy, before whom they formerly bent with humility.

Another class of men, who form a floating mass on the surface of society, are adventurers of all countries, gamblers, &c. Some of them purchase estates without a real,—make a show of riches which they never possessed,—blaze like a meteor for a moment,—and then disappear for ever, leaving their creditors the dupes of their credulity. Beware, people of Puerto Rico, when you see a foreigner land on your shores, grandly dressed, with his whole equipage under his arm, without a servant—introducing himself as a marquis, a baron, the son of a great banker, or a famous general—be sure, although he says he is merely travelling to observe men and things, he is only a sharper, badly disguised, who comes with an intention of making your property his prey, and laughing at you for your folly. This happens every day. Other chevaliers de l'industrie, who do a great deal of harm, are the barbers of France and the colonies, who have the insolence to come to practise medicine, ignorant even of the first principles of the art. They generally announce themselves as physicians just arrived from Paris; and many valuable lives have been sacrificed to their empiricism and ignorance. These men are easily distinguished from those of real pretensions. The island is every where swarming with them.

The only class of foreigners truly useful and respectable, are those engaged in agriculture and commerce, who have capital of their own; these are respected by the people, and protected by the government, and form a part of estimable society. Even those men of agricultural knowledge who, from the depressed state of the foreign colonies, come to this island as overseers, are highly re-

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spected if they conduct themselves properly; and some of them have acquired property by their industry.

In all the country towns there are a very mischievous set of men, called scribes (plumutas). They are not regular bred lawyers. They just know enough to be able to write a memorial, and to entangle the most simple case. They ruin many a poor and honest family by promoting law-suits. They often defend both parties at the same time. They tell both parties that they are right, that they will both infallibly gain the suit—and the ignorant and credulous countrymen, led astray by the pompous names of justice, law, right, &c., are not undeceived until months have elapsed, until they have spent their last farthing—and are obliged perhaps to sell the only cow that gives milk to their children, to pay these counterfeit lawyers their iniquitous exactions. How many unfortunate men have been condemned to drag a chain, who have deserved it a thousand times less than these men, who like a swarm of locusts desolate the land where they alight!

The last class of whites which I have to describe, require a separate and particular consideration, as they form no inconsiderable portion of those who have colonized this island. These are men who, for political or civil crimes, have been sent to the galleys of this fortress. They are condemned for different periods, according to the nature of their offences: at the expiration of their term of punishment they are set at liberty, and few of them have any inducement to return to their native country. If their conduct is good, their former faults are soon forgotten: if active and industrious, they soon find employment. They are looked on with pity, rather than with detestation. To be white, is a species of title of nobility in a country where the slaves and people of colour form the lower ranks of society, and where every

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grade of colour, ascending from the jet-black negro to the pure white, carries with it a certain feeling of superiority. We might naturally expect to find society and manners in some degree tinctured with the vices and propensities of these convicts: it is difficult to imagine how they could be so quickly cleansed of the moral turpitude which must inhabit the minds of men degraded in the scale of human nature. It is something novel and extraordinary to see men who had been dragging a criminal's chain, and been associated with the basest of mankind, on a sudden becoming peaceable and orderly citizens. In a circle of society comparatively small, where a great number of such characters are incorporated, the continual commission of crime would naturally be anticipated: nevertheless, quite the contrary is here the case. Those men, removed far from the scene of their former offences,—far from the vigilant and persecuting eye of the laws they had outraged, and the persons they had offended,—removed far beyond the view of the relatives and friends they had dishonoured, feel desirous of returning to the bosom of society, in a country where their persons and their crimes are unknown. The Creoles of Puerto Rico, ever ready to extend their arms to the unfortunate, ever generous and hospitable, have their sympathy doubly awakened at seeing a white man reduced to a state of misery greater than that of the African slave. The moment that the banished criminal sets his foot on the land of Puerto Rico, a prospect of hope opens to his view. He beholds many of those who had preceded him in crime restored to society, possessing property, and living in the bosom of their families: this example, this hope, is a strong inducement to good conduct. Man is the child of circumstances: the exclusion of hope would for ever extinguish the latent spark of

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honourable feeling and amendment. Now, when the term of his sentence expires, he dreads the idea of returning to Spain, where, perhaps, his faults would still be remembered,—where he would be pointed out in the streets by the children, who would say, "There goes a man who has returned from transportation." It would be like a millstone round his neck; he could never rise to credit or respectability. In Puerto Rico, on the contrary, there were no witnesses of his offences to reproach him. Under these circumstances, the character and conduct of numbers of the convict class have undergone a happy change. They have applied themselves to industry; formed respectable connexions by marriage; and in a few years many of them have raised themselves to opulence. Such has been the fortune of many individuals whose offspring enjoy a respectable consideration in this island, whom it would be illiberal and unjust to reproach with the faults of their forefathers.

From this view of the inhabitants, and the strange mixture of colours and classes, it might be supposed that robberies and assassinations would occur frequently. Yet in no country on the face of the globe is crime of an atrocious nature less frequent. The extent of robbery never exceeds the stealing of a horse, a cow, or a bunch of plantains: highway robbery is unknown, and assassination is so rare that, when it occurs, it excites universal horror. A stranger with a purse of gold may travel from one extremity of the island to the other, alone and unarmed, without meeting with the smallest obstacle. With liberal and unbounded hospitality he is received in every house; and instead of meeting with continual dangers from such a heterogeneous population, he finds every where a hearty welcome, good offices, and benevolent feelings.

It often surprises me to observe how much the inha-

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bitants of this island have been misrepresented in foreign countries. I knew a Danish lady who had just arrived from Copenhagen, whose head had been so filled with stories of the rapes, robberies, and assassinations of the Spaniards, that she was terrified to such a degree at the idea of landing in Puerto Rico, that it was with difficulty she could be prevailed on to go on shore. Even many persons in the French and English islands, whom one would expect to be better informed from their proximity, entertain the most preposterous notions with respect to the government and people of this island. I have visited, at one time or another, nearly the whole of the West India islands; and I can affirm that, in peaceable and orderly conduct, and submission to the laws, few of them equal, and none of them exceed, the inhabitants of this island. In what country on earth shall we behold noisy festivals, where people of all colours and classes are mingled together without any distinction, whose dispositions and interests often clash, among whom private piques exist, and whom injuries, supposed or real, might prompt to revenge,—and yet not one outrage committed, not one insult offered? I have beheld this order in the midst of disorder, and this forbearance, only in Puerto Rico. Even in Europe, accidents and robberies occur wherever there are public diversions. The sharpers of London and Paris always take advantage of public rejoicings to reap a golden harvest; and seldom does a fair take place in Ireland but some lives are lost, or at least some heads broken.

Here it is necessary to pause, in order to give a description, although imperfect, of the festivals and diversions to which I allude; for they are peculiar to this island, and form a characteristic part of the manners of the people; and as they do not exist in any other

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country, (at least that I have seen or heard of,) they will not fail to be in some degree interesting. As these fêtes are held on horseback, and racing is one of the principal features that distinguish them, it is necessary first to describe the very curious manner in which the horses are caparisoned on such occasions, and indeed generally for riding and travelling.

The native of Puerto Rico is passionately fond of horses: the Xivaro must be very poor indeed who has not one or two horses, which serve to carry both his own person and the produce of his land to market; for the Xivaro, be his horse ever so lean, or the burthen ever so heavy, seats himself on the top of it, and thus guides the animal. He will sooner steal a horse for a day, and ride him, than walk a league. The rich have always several saddle-horses which are solely reserved for riding. A large pillion, made of strong linen and stuffed with straw, is girded on the horse's back: two square wicker baskets, very neatly made, about a foot long and eight inches wide, united together by a leathern strap, are thrown over the pillion on either side, close to the horse's neck; they are firmly girded on, and serve in travelling to carry clothes or provisions. A cushion is placed on the pillion, which is covered with a cloak or carpet; and the poorer classes have a blanket, to protect them from the rain. It is placed loosely, that it may be drawn forth when required. Every man in the country, rich and poor, carries an immense basket-hilted sword, a yard and a quarter long, which is placed in the baskets, or under the cushion-pannel, with the point sticking out behind, and waving to and fro in the air. There are no stirrups. The horseman or horsewoman sits on the cushion with the face towards the horse's head, the feet gently hanging on either side of his neck; and the baskets,

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which have handles to them, serve to hold by in case of emergency. A person mounted on horseback in this way has a very curious appearance; but it is a very commodious and easy way of travelling. Two persons can ride on the same horse, and the Xivaro travels in this way with his wife or daughters. If the horse happens to stumble on a bad road, the rider seldom sustains an injury from a fall. In crossing rivers or rivulets, which abound, the feet are kept dry, which is so important to health in warm climates.

On St. John's eve, and many days previously, hundreds of persons bring their horses to the city and its neighbourhood, to run on that festival and succeeding days. All the best horses in the island are kept up carefully for this day: it is the day on which fame is acquired for swiftness in the horse and dexterity in the rider. The steed that runs on this day may be considered a superior horse; and the Xivaro who has the good fortune to beat the rest, gains the hearts of a thousand fair ones, who admire and applaud him from every balcony. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 24th of June,—that day which the native of Puerto hails with tumultuous joy,—which equalizes society,—a procession on horseback, of men, women, and children, with flags waving,—preceded and followed by a multitude of boys shouting, and persons of all classes,—proceeds to the Government House, where the chief of the procession, who is called the king, reads a burlesque proclamation, which is composed for the occasion, and which is the more loudly applauded the more nonsense it contains. This ceremony is the prelude to racing and masking. A proclamation of police is published, inculcating order, which is only a matter of form, for no abuses take place. From that day, morning and evening, ladies and gentlemen run like furies through the streets, in their best fancy

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dresses, and all the inhabitants, with countenances which indicate the pleasure they enjoy, fill the balconies of the houses. At night bonfires are made at the corners of the streets, to see and to be seen by those on horseback. Every body now takes a seat at the street doors. Every man on horseback carries a female behind him; and he who rides alone is hooted and jeered by the bystanders, as a person who has been jilted by his sweetheart. It is one of the most ludicrous scenes imaginable:—old men of eighty, and young girls of fifteen,—the lawyer with his wig,—the officers of the garrison,—soldiers, xivaros, —blacks,—mulattoes,—with their mothers, wives, sisters, sweethearts, relations, and friends, run through the streets screeching, all on a perfect equality, without any one taking advantage of it to offer an insult. Those on horseback make jocular remarks, and sometimes throw out taunts and jeers on those who are seated at the doors, which are answered in perfect good humour. During three days all the houses are thrown open; lemonade, wine, and cooling drinks are offered to those who wish to partake of them; and although the people of colour enter the houses, masked and without reserve, not a single robbery takes place.

After St. Peter's day, also, every successive Sunday,[1] masked balls are given; and all classes of the people, dressed in a thousand fantastic ways, go from house to house with music playing in every part of the town. In some places fifteen or twenty persons, dressed in character, make their appearance. Those ladies whose beauty is somewhat faded by age are sure to put on very handsome masks on these days. Neither age nor sex is free from the contagion. Men dressed like women, and *vice versâ*, parade in every direction. The blacks, dressed in a thousand odd ways, and making

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a thousand contortions with their bodies, perambulate the streets, until nature, exhausted by running and bawling, and by the heat of the season at this period, sinks to a short repose. The next day the same scenes are renewed, and continue till they become tiresome and fatiguing. A severe censor would undoubtedly be disposed to warn fathers and mothers against the danger of allowing their daughters to ride alone and at *night*, with men not callous to the charms of the fair sex. It is said that love affairs are concerted and arranged on these occasions; but my object is not to attempt to reform manners, but to portray them exactly in the light in which they have appeared to me.

The component parts of the society or *gran ton* of Puerto Rico are officers of the army and militia, magistrates, lawyers, physicians, merchants, and planters. They only meet on certain occasions, such as public balls or fêtes. Every one forms his society in the domestic circles of their houses. The tertulias of Madrid, the soirées of Paris, and the tea parties of London, are unknown. The white man whose conduct is good, and who dresses genteelly (unless he be a common soldier or sailor, or a mechanic), is admitted into society. Although the ancient families pride themselves on their descent, and on certain occasions assert their dignity, yet they yield to the custom of the country, which considers colour in some degree a title to respect,—a kind of current nobility. Even with this prejudice, descendants of coloured ancestors, who have managed to establish proofs of nobility (called whitewashing), are not excluded from society with that inexorable severity which prevails in the French and English colonies.*

* The planter in the Spanish colonies differs essentially from the same class in the British islands. In the latter the proprietors of large estates generally reside in Europe, leaving the management of their property to resident agents. Even

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The young Creoles are particularly anxious to be distinguished by rank. They all endeavour either to enter the army, to purchase commissions in the militia, or to obtain some employment under Government, which may entitle them to wear uniform. They seldom apply themselves to trade or to mechanics, but many of them are persevering agriculturists. They are endowed with a lively imagination and quick apprehension. Wherever they have applied themselves to study they have made a proficiency in literature. They are passionately addicted to games of chance; and the ostentation of wishing to make an appearance beyond their means too often induces many individuals, otherwise adorned with many good qualities, to become professed gamblers.

Cock-fighting is a national custom, or vice, in the same way as pugilism is in England, or as the love of bull-fights characterizes the natives of the Peninsula. Every village has a licensed cock-pit. To suppress them would be to deprive the inhabitants of their principal amusement. It would carry melancholy and regret to every bosom. Every house and cabin is provided with game cocks, which are carefully bred; and no people in the world know better how to keep them in fighting condition.

those who only possess small estates seldom establish themselves permanently in the country; but hoard up their earnings for the purpose of retiring to Europe. They seldom or never marry with the Creole ladies; but, living publicly with a mulatto concubine, give a shocking example of immorality, and leave behind them a progeny abandoned to vice. They may be compared to birds of passage, gleaning from the soil in their flight, without forming any permanent establishment. This is one of the great causes why so few whites are to be found in the British colonies, compared with the numbers that exist in the Spanish islands. In Puerto Rico the natives of old Spain who establish themselves either in commerce or agriculture in general become heads of families, whose branches extend in every direction. The estates are not fitted up on the grand and expensive scale in which they are seen in the English and French islands; but the planter, residing on his land with his family, forms a fixed and permanent part of the population and of white society.

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The Xivaros, a name which is applied to those white people who reside in the country (I do not here allude to the better classes), are very civil in their manners. But, though they seem all simplicity and humility, they are so acute in their dealings that they are sure to deceive a person who is not very guarded. Although they would scorn to commit a robbery, yet they think it only fair to deceive or overreach in a bargain. Like the peasantry of Ireland, they are proverbial for their hospitality; and, like them, they are ever ready to fight on the slightest provocation. They swing themselves to and fro in their hammocks all day long, smoking their cigars and scraping a guitar. The plantain grove which surrounds their houses, and the coffee-tree, which grows almost without cultivation, afford them a frugal subsistence. If with these they have a cow and horse, they consider themselves rich and happy. Happy indeed they are: they feel neither the pangs nor remorse which follow the steps of disappointed ambition, nor the daily wants experienced by the poor inhabitants of northern regions.

The houses of all classes, both in the towns and in the country, are built of wood. Those in the country are all built on posts deeply and firmly fixed in the ground. About eight feet from the earth the first floor is laid of boards; the space beneath being left entirely open, so that a man on horseback may enter it. This space answers as a stable for horses, and sometimes one or two rooms are made in it, which serve as stores. The upper story is ascended by a staircase, at the foot of which there is always a large block of wood to facilitate mounting on horseback. The sitting-rooms or parlours are spacious; but generally the houses are not built with much regard to comfort or convenience. The windows have no glass: they are shut by sliding boards; so that when it rains, or when the wind blows

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with violence, the family remain in darkness. The roofs of the better class of houses are covered with wooden shingles. There are some houses in the country built in the modern style of the foreign colonies, with Persian blinds, and every comfort and convenience. Some of the houses are well furnished; other persons persevere in the custom of having many hammocks and few chairs. However, in Ponce, Mayagues, and near the capital, there are country houses with furniture, ornaments, and convenience, not to be exceeded, taking the general average, by those of the French and English islands.

The houses, or rather cabins, of the poor Xivaros are also built on posts, which are absolutely necessary to preserve them from the humidity of the earth; but they are only raised two or three feet from the ground. In place of boards, the floor is made of the large bamboo, or the palm tree, cut like boards: they bend beneath the foot; and between the interstices every thing below is discernible. They are divided into two apartments by a partition of reeds,—the room in which the family sit by day, and the sleeping room. The father, mother, and children, male and female, and of all ages, sleep, promiscuously huddled together, on a large platform of boards, which is the only bed they generally possess.

The kitchen is built apart from the house, but a bridge of cane or boards forms a communication between them. These cabins are thatched with the leaf of the palm tree, the sides are often open, or merely constructed of the same sort of leaves as the roof—such is the mildness of the climate. Some cabins have doors, others have none. There is nothing to dread from robbers, and if there were banditti, their poverty would protect them from violence. A few calabash shells, and earthen pots,—one or two hammocks made of the bark of the palm tree,—two or three game

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cocks, and a machete,—form the extent of their moveable property. A few coffee plants and plantain trees, a cow and a horse, an acre of land in corn or sweet potatoes, constitute the property of what would be denominated a comfortable Xivaro—who, mounted on his meagre and hard-worked horse, with his long sword protruding from his baskets, dressed with a broad-brimmed straw hat, cotton jacket, clean shirt, and check pantaloons, sallies forth from his cabin to mass, to a cock fight, or to a dance, thinking himself the most independent and happy being in existence.

There are no inns for travellers either in the towns or country (except one in the capital); but there is so much genuine hospitality among all classes, that at whatever house a stranger calls and asks for lodging he is cheerfully admitted. He is treated with a frank cordiality that flows from the heart; the best food is prepared for him, the best bed is allotted for his reception; and the neighbours are invited to amuse him by singing and dancing to a guitar or violin. He may remain as long as he pleases, and at his departure the host expresses regret that the stay should have been so short. If the stranger should have come from those civilized countries where money is paid for civility, and offer a pecuniary recompense, he would offer an unpardonable insult. Even the poorest Xivaro, who has nothing but a roasted plantain, would freely share it, and even resign his only hammock to a traveller. It has been observed by many writers that those countries most advanced in civilization are also the most inhospitable; that is to say, that one of the brightest virtues that adorn human nature, the consolation of the wretched, the solace of the stranger in a foreign land, is annihilated by civilization. It may be asked, what has mankind gained by that artificial state of society which

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renders the heart obdurate, and the manners suspicious and selfish? The wild Arab of the desert, the savage Indian of America, respect the sacred rights of hospitality, which are not denied even to a foe. I have observed that those countries and cities where commerce preponderates, and where the people are engrossed with gain and self-interest, are not hospitable—while Ireland and Spain are proverbial for their hospitality. But I have myself found no country where this virtue is so generally or extensively practised as among the people of South America and Puerto Rico. Whether it originates in the climate, in the fewer wants of the inhabitants, or arises from several causes combined, I cannot determine; but this I know, and have practically experienced, that they are among the most hospitable people on the face of the globe.

Many writers have laid it down as a general rule that the natives of warm climates are slothful and timid. Sloth most undoubtedly forms a prominent feature in their character; but the people of this island are rather daring than cowardly. Indolence is the necessary consequence of their genial climate—a climate in which the subsistence necessary to the support of man is almost spontaneously produced. The inhabitants of cold and barren regions are industrious from necessity; every exertion of industry, every mental effort, is necessary to preserve them from perishing from cold and hunger; whilst under the tropics, the frozen atmosphere of northern climes is never felt, and the wants of nature are easily appeased. The Creoles of Puerto Rico have at all times been eminently distinguished for personal bravery: whenever a foreign enemy has landed on their shores, they have evinced unshaken loyalty and heroic courage. In single combat with each other they fight with a pertinacious valour which borders on ferocity. The combatants sometimes cut and hack each other in such a

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manner that both of them remain dead on the field. They are very punctilious on the point of honour, and decide their quarrels fairly, man to man, disdaining to take any unfair advantage. The natives of this island who have served in the campaigns of the Spanish army in South America, have always displayed the most undaunted valour. They were equally conspicuous for orderly conduct, strict subordination, and for never having in any instance deserted to the enemy. The Spanish generals always ranked them among the best troops of the armies.

Riding out one afternoon in the country, I was overtaken by one of those sudden showers of rain so common in tropical climates. I fled for shelter to the nearest house, which happened to be the cottage of a poor Xivaro. It was on the slope of a little hill, surrounded by plantain trees, which did not appear to to be carefully cultivated; and a large patch of sweet potatoes was close by. I placed my horse without ceremony under the projecting roof. I entered the humble dwelling with the usual salute, which is the same as in Ireland, "God save all here;" which was courteously answered by the man of the house, who seemed to be about forty years of age. He was dressed in a check shirt and wide linen drawers. He was coiled up in a hammock of such small dimensions that his body was actually doubled in two; one foot rested on the ground, with which he propelled the hammock to and fro; and at intervals with his great toe he turned a large sweet potatoe, which was roasting on a few embers placed on a flag on the ground close to him, and which no doubt was intended for his evening meal. He had a guitar in his hand, from which he produced sounds which appeared to me discordant, but seemed to please him exceedingly. On my entrance he turned on his side and offered me the hammock, which of course I refused to

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accept. Two small children, perfectly naked, were swinging to and fro in another small hammock and greedily devouring large roasted plantains. The woman of the house was squatted on the floor, feeding four game-cocks, which were lodged in the best part of the house, while the husband every now and then would warn her not to give them too much corn or too much water. They received me with an urbanity unknown to the peasantry of northern Europe. They placed a large leaf of the palm tree over my saddle to protect it from the rain; and pressed me to sit down in the kindest manner. The host was very communicative: he gave me the whole pedigree of his game-cocks, and enumerated the battles they had won. He pointed one out to me which he said was "a most delicate bird," an expression made use of by the Xivaros to denote its great value; and he concluded by offering it to me as a present. Indeed, a Xivaro would form a very poor opinion of a person who could not discuss the merits of a game-cock. On going away they offered me their cabin with as much politeness as if it had been a palace, and hoped to see me again. I was forcibly struck with the native courtesy of these people; and it gratified me to observe the content and happiness they enjoy, without a thought for the present, or a care for the future,—without wants, without wishes, without ambition.

The women of Puerto Rico are generally of the middle size. They are elegantly and delicately formed; their waists are tapering and slender. Their pale complexion creates interest, which is heightened by the brilliancy of their fine black eyes. Their hair is black as jet; their eyebrows arched. They have, in a high degree, that seductive and elegant air which distinguishes the Cadiz ladies. They walk with the grace which is peculiar

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to the fair of Andalusia. Their manners are not only pleasing, but fascinating: without having the advantage of the brilliant education of the ladies of London or Paris, they are possessed of great natural vivacity, and an ease of manners which in England is only to be found in the best society. They converse with fluency, and their natural talent and wit supply the artificial aids of education. They are, on the whole, more interesting than beautiful, more amiable than accomplished. They dress with an elegance and taste which I have seldom seen surpassed; the Parisian fashions being invariably followed and imitated. The public balls are splendid. A stranger who should walk through the city in the daytime, or in the evening, meeting not with a single female except persons of colour, would be surprised at night to attend a public ball. His eyes would be dazzled by an assemblage of Puerto Rico ladies; he would scarcely believe he was in that same capital where he could not find, during the whole day, the trace of a fair one. This admiration is expressed by all strangers; for most certainly the ladies of this island, in a ball room, would do honour to any country in the world. Although too little attention is paid to cultivating their natural abilities, yet there are many of them who, by the force merely of talent and application, have made great proficiency in French and painting. Without being taught by a dancing master, they dance with grace and elegance, and, like all the ladies of America, they are fond to excess of dancing. They are passionately fond of their own country, but they have the politeness and good-breeding in conversation not to make odious comparison of it with others. In the domestic circle they are affectionate wives, tender mothers, and attached and faithful friends. They are industrious, frugal, and economical, without meanness. They

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excel in horsemanship. In general they do not ride, as in Europe, on a saddle: a cushion is girded on the horse's back, and towards the neck two square baskets hang on either side. The lady sits on the cushion with her face to the horse's head, her feet hanging on each side of the neck: the baskets have handles to hold by, and also serve to carry clothes and provisions. This manner of riding, which is peculiar to the island, is very commodious, and well adapted to preserve the feet from damp. In this manner they travel over swamps and rivers without getting wet. This species of travelling is pleasant on pacing horses, but on any other it is not so agreeable.

A stranger, well dressed, even without a recommendation, is received in every house with cordiality and frankness. All the members of a family vie with each other in rendering him some act of kindness or civility. The house, once offered by the master or mistress, can be visited afterwards without ceremony. The general hour of visiting families is in the evening, or at night. The day is occupied in their domestic concerns; however, visits purely complimentary are received and returned in the morning. In every part of the island, even in the interior, the same manners, dress, customs, and politeness are observed, and the same civility and attention to strangers.

If a person wishes to conform to the rules of good society in Puerto Rico, it is absolutely necessary to have an almanac at the head of the bed, and to consult it every morning; for if the birth-day of a lady slips the memory, without your having paid a visit in all the forms of etiquette, or, if ill, sent a card, it is considered an unpardonable breach of politeness. It is a grave offence, not easily forgot or forgiven, and no excuse almost is admitted. On the morning of this auspicious day, the fair one who counts another year rises early, and puts on her best attire. At

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ten o'clock she takes her seat on the sofa, accompanied by a female relation or friend, and receives the homage of her relatives, friends, and acquaintance. Some pay the visit in person; others send their cards, which are received by a servant, and carefully placed in a glass shade. Verses, sweetmeats, and bouquets of flowers, are sent to the goddess—a turkey and a pig bleed as an oblation at the shrine of beauty—friends are invited to dinner—toasts go round in quick succession—wit is displayed by appropriate verses, and plaudits deafen the ears. All is conviviality, all is mirth and gaiety, and the festival is often concluded by a dance. Late at night the company retires; and then all the cards, which had been so carefully deposited, are called for; every name is read with scrupulous attention, every visit enumerated; and then woe to that friend or acquaintance who has neglected the ceremony of a visit on this sacred day! Their names are expunged from the list of friends,—all intercourse ceases, and enmity often ensues; hence family disputes frequently originate. Stranger, on your arrival in Puerto Rico, if you visit the fair sex, your first care should be to purchase an almanac, and to read it, as you would your prayer-book, every morning: beware never to forget the birth-day of a lady!

The same ceremony is observed with respect to the gentlemen, who are equally rigid in exacting this homage. I know some gentlemen of the old school who keep a regular list of those who have visited them on these occasions; and feuds and enmity have ensued from forgetting this day of ceremony.

The frank manners of the ladies of this island and of Spain have been very much misinterpreted by foreigners, who have judged from superficial observation: they have too often attributed to levity what proceeds from national

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manners. Persons accustomed to the austere manners and monastic reserve of the fair of a northern clime should not be inexorably severe in their judgment, and impute to weak morals the unreserved expression of a lively imagination and warm heart,—the effects of a genial climate and a clear and cloudless sky. Though less impressed by the artificial and conventional restraints of education and society, they are not less chaste or virtuous on that account.* It is in overgrown capitals, where great wealth is accompanied by great misery, that morals become most corrupt; but in an agricultural country, rich in provisions, where the want of subsistence is unknown, and where early marriages prevail, the temptations to many of the vices which infest European society have comparatively little power.

Ladies, in all countries, are fond of what is commonly

* Of their frankness and simplicity of manners I may give the following illustration:—

I went one day to pay a complimentary visit to a lady who had been unwell. I found her seated in an arm-chair, in her bed-chamber, surrounded by visitors, and her head tied with a handkerchief. I was requested to walk in, and after inquiring after her health, and congratulating her on her recovery, I took my seat. The heat was intolerable,—all the windows were shut, and the perspiration ran down my cheeks. I thought that so much heat, and so much animal effluvia, could not be very good for a convalescent; however, such is the custom. To every person that came in she commenced the detail of her illness, mentioning the medicines she had taken, and the effect they had upon her, without omitting the most minute circumstances. While thus expatiating on purges, emetics, and blisters, and their consequences, she suddenly started up, and begged the company would pardon her,—that she had taken medicine that morning, and its operation had commenced. She made most horrible grimaces, no doubt from the griping of the medicine. We all retired to the saloon—the door of the bed-chamber closed. I remained surprised at the scene I had just witnessed; but I found it made no impression on the company,—the conversation went on as usual; and I soon discovered that such were the simple manners of the country, where artifice and fiction are unknown. In England a lady would be overwhelmed with shame,—she would sink into the ground, if she heard breeches mentioned, or a leg: the former would be called "inexpressibles." Such is the force of habit and education in different countries: each may have a proper sense of delicacy, only they understand it in different ways.

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denominated tea-table scandal. This disposition also exists here. They criticise dresses, speak of marriages, discuss love affairs, and pry into their neighbours' concerns, precisely as happens in almost all small places in all countries. Why should this island be an exception to the general rule? We here speak of mortals, not of angels. I have heard it asserted before I visited this island, that the ladies were much addicted to smoking segars. I have never seen them smoke, I must confess; and if any of them do indulge in it they must do it very privately. However, I should prefer to see a lady smoking to drinking gin, as some are said to do in Germany and Holland.

The women soon come to maturity in this climate; they marry very young, are exceedingly prolific, and consequently their charms decay at an age when in Europe they would be in the full bloom of beauty. It is not an uncommon thing to see a grandmother and her grandchildren in the same dance. All the ladies, whether rich or poor, if white, are on visiting terms. Visits are made and received with the most punctilious exactness. The ladies seldom go out of doors unless to the shops at night, or to the country on horseback. In the evenings they take the air on the flat roofs of their houses. They bathe frequently, and are very attentive to the cleanliness of their persons and houses.

They have an extreme sensibility, and are ever ready to relieve the unfortunate,—while they treat with neglect and contempt those who come to their island and, from being rich or petulant, have the ill-breeding to consider themselves entitled to profound veneration, assuming a superiority to which they have no claim. Their humanity to strangers in distress deserves the highest commendation. I have seen strangers who had fallen sick,—unknown, poor, and without friends,—taken care of as if they were relations by the ladies of this island, without ostentation or motives

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of interest. This is a brilliant trait in their character, and amply compensates for the defects of their education. They may be compared to the diamond when taken from the mine, which requires only the polish of the lapidary to impart to it its full value, by giving it all the splendour of its natural lustre. If the ladies of this island are so elegant, so fascinating, so graceful, so kind and humane, as mere children of nature, what might we not expect from their good hearts and lively genius with the advantages of a refined education?

The old opinions and prejudices of ignorant persons too generally exist in this island, on a subject of much importance. I have heard it frequently observed by old persons who could not read or write themselves, that they considered it highly injurious to have their children taught to read or write; for they say it only gives them a facility of writing love letters; remarking that as they had made money and gone through the world without such acquirements, why should their children not do the same. However, in contradiction to the observations of these sages, I think that education is of the greatest importance to every class of society;—it refines the manners, ameliorates the heart, and teaches the duty which man owes to his Creator and to his fellow-creatures. The establishment of schools for the education of the youth of both sexes is much wanting. The curates of the different villages, who generally are, or ought to be, well-educated men, would do an important service by superintending the education of youth. I am persuaded that a seminary, properly established, would meet with support and encouragement. Youths who are now sent to France or America for two or three years, acquire only a smattering of French and English, and obtain a very superficial share of knowledge. Without one useful or solid acquirement, they return to their country, ignorant and

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petulant, despising their own institutions, and unduly praising those of other nations, without being able to form a competent judgment, or to make a comparison between them. National manners can only be formed by national institutions and national education. It is very useful and expedient that men should travel into foreign countries for information; but their characters and opinions should be first matured in their native soil, and the first precepts and rudiments of knowledge taught them in their native language. They should be taught to love and respect the government under which they were born, and to venerate its institutions. It is only thus a nation of patriots can be formed, who shall learn to appreciate the useful inventions and wise institutions of other nations, while they promote and venerate their own.

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CHAPTER IV.

Government—Office of Captain-General—Court of Royal Audience—The Intendancy—The Cavildo—Provincial Functionaries—Ecclesiastical Tribunal—Naval Tribunal—The Consulado—Annual Tour of the Captain-General—Municipal Committees—Excellence and Impartiality of the Spanish Colonial Laws—State of Military Defence—Fortifications—Attempt of the English on the Island in 1797*—Military Division of the Island—Amount of Military Force—Security from Conquest.*

THE government, laws, and institutions of this island are nearly similar to those established by the kings of Spain in every part of the western hemisphere; although some local variations may be found, arising from insular situation, or introduced in consequence of the recent revolutions on the South American continent. This island was formerly thought of so litttle account that the government was conferred on a colonel; but it has risen so much in population and general importance that it is now commanded by a lieutenant-general, with the title of captain-general and governor, who is also president of the Royal Audience, which is the supreme court of justice.

CAPTAIN-GENERAL.—The power of the captain-general is supreme in military affairs. He is likewise

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president of all the tribunals, excepting those which relate to the royal treasures and commerce. Although, in the capacity of captain-general, he may form whatever regulations he pleases, without advice and without control, he generally submits any case of importance to a junta de guerra, composed of the principal military officers. He is exclusively charged with all political relations between his own district and the colonial governments of foreign powers.

In civil matters his authority is great; but it is in some degree circumscribed by the heavy responsibility which attaches to legal decisions. Although a captain-general may be a good soldier, and be well acquainted with the duties of his important station, as well as of his profession, it is not expected that he should be a lawyer, or able to decide in cases of complicated law-suits; therefore the governor has a legal adviser, named by the king, and receiving a salary, who gives his opinion in every case, for the justice or injustice of which he stands responsible,—the captain-general not being chargeable with any of the results of a sentence given contrary to the rules of equity. However, the sentence has no validity without his signature; and if he does not approve the sentence he can call in the advice of another legal counsellor, and reverse or alter the former sentence. The governor may give an opinion contrary to the advice of these counsellors, and suspend the execution of the sentence, giving his reasons for so doing, and forwarding the whole proceedings for the deliberation of the king. But this is a power which he never exercises, except on extraordinary occasions, when he plainly perceives collision, corruption, or injustice in those who should guide themselves by the spirit of the laws. As president of the Royal Audience he has

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no voice in their decisions, nor any influence or vote in civil cases; but in matters which relate to the government of the island he has a vote as president, and no decree of the Royal Audience can be carried into effect without his signature. That tribunal, which represents the majesty of the sovereign, is the only court that is permitted to investigate his actions.

The captain-general of Puerto Rico, in consequence of the revolution of South America, and the precarious state of this island, situated in the centre of declared enemies and envious rivals, was invested with extraordinary and almost unlimited powers by the king. In the course of several years this power has never been exerted to the injury of a single individual. The power of a captain-general, though nearly as great as that of the king himself, is yet such as a good governor would never stretch to its full extent, unless when it was imperatively called for; while a bad one would be very cautious of abusing it, on account of the responsibility he would incur, and the certainty of being called to a rigid account for any act of maladministration or flagrant injustice. The moment a captain-general's time of service expires, which is limited only by the will of the sovereign, a person is appointed to investigate his conduct during his government. The person selected for this duty is generally the new governor, or some other officer of rank, confidence, and integrity. A proclamation is issued, informing the inhabitants of the removal of the governor, and calling on those who may have complaints to come forward before the expiration of forty days, after which period no application can be received. If any complaint is preferred of a serious nature, the opinion of the law officers is taken with respect to its justice or injustice, and this opinion is forwarded to the king for his decision upon it. This constitutes a wise part of the Spanish

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legislation, as it protects the weak from the aggressions of the strong, and the subject in general from the arbitrary power of men, who, at such distance from court, and invested with uncontrolled power, might with facility commit acts of oppression, were it not for the dread of the infallible and impartial investigation which is instituted into their conduct. It is worthy of remark, that out of all the governors who have commanded in this island since its conquest, there is not on record the name of one who had been proved to have abused the trust confided in him by his sovereign.

COURT OF ROYAL AUDIENCE.—The infant state of this island hitherto, rendered the expense attending the establishment of a Royal Audience too heavy; but in consequence of the increase of population, and the improved state of agriculture and commerce, the king thought it expedient, for the better and more prompt administration of justice, and to obviate the expense, delay, and difficulty attending appeals to the Havannah, to create a tribunal in this island. However, his Majesty, in order not to burden the colony too heavily, only formed half a tribunal *(medeo sala,)* composed of the captain-general as president, a regent, three judges, one fiscal, two reporters, and a marshal. This audience is invested with the power of superintendence of the other constituted authorities, and even of the ecclesiastical tribunal. The captain-general is strictly enjoined by the king to consult the audience on any emergency. They also enjoy the extraordinary privilege of corresponding with the king, direct. The members of the audience in a body are distinguished by the title of Highness, and the captain-general is directed to treat them with every deference, as magistrates, and persons whom the king has entrusted with the supreme administration of justice.

I trust the Royal Audience will adopt measures to

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repress and discourage that spirit of litigation which too much characterizes the Creoles, tarnishes many of the good qualities which they possess, and often involves their families in ruin, and themselves in a complication of continual law-suits. There is no doubt that the island, in a judicial point of view, will receive much benefit from the establishment of this tribunal, whose members are always enlightened and well-educated men, who have borne a high reputation for legal knowledge and incorruptible integrity.

THE INTENDANCY.—The intendancy was till the year 1813 annexed to the captain-generalship, but from that period it was placed under the control of a distinct officer. The intendant of this island ranks with a major-general of the army, and is entitled to all the honours, considerations, and privileges of that high rank; he has, however, no military command. His duty is to watch over the revenue; to receive the duties from the different custom-houses; to regulate the duties, and to suggest such measures to the minister of finance as he may think expedient. He is assisted by a secretary and a great number of clerks. He has under him, but nominated by the king, two chief officers, who keep each a key of the treasury chest; and no money can be paid out of it without their knowledge and consent, for which they are responsible. They can reject three times successively any order of the intendant which they conceive unjust; after that they must comply, but can enter a protest to save their own responsibility. But the captain-general, who is charged with the defence and preservation of the island, can, without accounting to any authority but the supreme government, dispose of the public funds, if the public service should require it; and his order on this head is conclusive, and must be implicitly obeyed. If the public service should require it, he

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can also suspend the intendant, advising his Majesty thereof, and the motives (which must be important) that compelled him to take a step of such rigour. Instances of this, indeed, have never occurred,—but it serves as a salutary check on the improper management of the public funds.

As the regulation of the finance of a nation is of such vital importance to its strength and welfare, the government can never be too scrupulous in the choice of persons for an employment where integrity and a just acquaintance with the principles of political economy are indispensable requisites in the candidates. This branch of political economy has been much misunderstood and abused in this island; and until 1825, when the captain-general took decisive measures for stopping the system of defalcation, the revenue was practically considered as the patrimony of individuals. For how was it possible for revenue officers with a small salary, only sufficient to live upon, to amass in a few years fortunes of 100,000 and 200,000 dollars, while the officers and troops were without pay? This requires no explanation.

CAVILDO.—The cavildo is invested with the charge of the police and municipal affairs, under the immediate inspection and control of the captain-general. There are only two in the island. They are composed of two alcaldes in ordinary, regidors, and a syndic. The governor is president of the cavildo. The alcaldes are elected every year, and hear all complaints in the first instance, and decide, with the aid of a legal adviser, without appeal, all debts not exceeding 100 dollars.

PROVINCIAL MAGISTRATES.—In the seven towns and villages which are the heads of departments, justice is administered by a magistrate entitled lieutenant of justice. This office was formerly usually executed by military officers, commandants of departments; but his Majesty has

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this year (1832) appointed legal men to these employments, calling them alcaldes mayors. In the exercise of his authority, which is extensive, the justice is responsible to the Royal Audience. The civil administration of the smaller towns and villages is entrusted to inferior magistrates, called lieutenants of war, who administer justice within their respective districts, and determine all debts under 100 dollars. These functionaries collect the duty of subsidy,—attend to the execution of the municipal laws, —making roads,—taking up vagrants,—and apprehending suspected persons who may have entered the country without a passport. They are elected every year by the captain-general, to whom they are directly responsible, and who again is answerable for their conduct. They receive six per cent. on the duties they collect, and they also receive fees for the signatures which they affix to public documents.

Ecclesiastical Tribunal.—This tribunal, which is composed of the bishop and the provisor, takes cognizance of affairs relating to the church. The captain-general is vice-regal patron, which enables him to check any abuse of power in the ecclesiastical tribunal. If a clergyman finds himself unjustly treated or persecuted by the bishop or his tribunal, he may appeal to the vice-patron, who can take cognizance of the business, and order the proceedings to be suspended if he finds them unjust and arbitrary; and if the bishop should not immediately conform to the orders and regulations established on this head, the vice-patron has the power to suspend him from the exercise of his ecclesiastical functions, and to take possession of his temporalities,—forwarding the whole of the proceedings to Madrid, for the king's approbation. This is a power of great magnitude and importance, with which it has been found necessary to

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invest the governors in America, to prevent the dangers which might arise from the existence of an uncontrolled ecclesiastical authority, at such a distance from the seat of the supreme government. History scarcely affords an example, however, of this power having been carried into effect.

The bishop proposes to the captain-general those curates he thinks most worthy to be nominated to the different towns and villages. The captain-general has the power of electing or rejecting them, as he thinks expedient; but, as the captain-general and the bishop always act in concert, there is an understanding between them on this head, which is of great importance in a political and civil point of view.

The zeal of the present venerable bishop in the public service was so great, that, at the advanced age of eighty years, he visited every town and village in the island on horseback, investigating and correcting the abuses and faults of the inferior clergy. He rewarded those who dutifully fulfilled their ministry, and punished those who gave a bad example to their flocks. In order to have a body of educated clergy, and to fit them for the arduous duties of their profession, he has built (as has been noticed in a previous chapter) a handsome stone edifice in the capital, for the education of those who wish to enter the church. This patriotic undertaking will perpetuate his memory,—as his virtuous and exemplary conduct, and amiable manners, have made him beloved and respected by every class of the inhabitants.

NAVAL TRIBUNAL.—The royal navy has also a tribunal, in which all offences committed by persons attached to the navy are investigated and judged. It is presided over by the commandant of marine, who has a legal

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adviser by whose written opinion he must be guided, in the same manner as the captain-general in his decisions. Every thing concerning the navy is subject to its jurisdiction, and the captain-general has no power of interference with its administration. An appeal from the decisions of this tribunal may be made to that of the admiral commanding at the station of the Havannah; but all the naval forces are subject to the orders of the captain-general.

CONSULADO.—The royal tribunal of the Consulado, established in 1826, is that in which all mercantile disputes are arranged or decided. It is formed by a consul, and two persons nominated by the parties in dispute. They decide in all mercantile matters, with the assistance of a legal adviser in cases which present doubts and difficulties. It has been observed by a modern writer of great reputation, that the Spanish code of mercantile laws is the most luminous and the best established of any in Europe.

The privileges and exemptions with which all these tribunals are invested, their different regulations, and the independence in which they stand of each other, might be supposed often to create a clash of opinions and interests, since every one who commits a fault naturally flies immediately for protection beneath the laws of his own class; and thus the interference of the military with the navy, the clergy with the civil power, or the intendancy with any of the others, may be conceived to form a continual source of complaint and recrimination, and of angry feeling, very detrimental to the public service; for the private piques of individuals are too often carried into public deliberations. This is an evil which is, however, in a great measure, practically remedied; for the captain-general has the power of interfering and making up all differences. But if the business should be of a very serious nature, he takes official cognizance of it, and forwards the case, with

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his opinion on the proceedings, to a tribunal formed in Spain, composed of clergymen, officers of the army and navy, civilians, &c., called the Tribunal de Competencia, which decides definitively and without appeal.

MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES.—No law or custom exists in any country more salutary, or which is productive of better consequences to the public good, than the annual visit which the captain-general pays to every part of the island. In every town and village where a magistrate is appointed for the administration of justice, twelve persons, the most respectable land proprietors and merchants of the neighbourhood, form a committee, which decides on the making and repairing of roads and bridges, and on every thing connected with the public welfare in their respective jurisdictions; and as they have to contribute to defray the expenses, they propose the easiest way of levying funds, and the cheapest means of accomplishing their undertakings. It may therefore be said that they legislate for themselves, and have a deep interest in the faithful execution of the laws. From these committees, which never meet except by express orders from the captain-general, to deliberate on some measure of public utility proposed for their consideration, the governor, on his visit to the different towns of the island, is able to collect correct information respecting the administration of justice, the application of the public funds, the state of the roads, the advance of agriculture, &c.; and they suggest any measures they may conceive expedient for the benefit of their respective districts. If any complaint of despotic exercise of power, improper conduct, or venality, exists against the local magistrate, he is fearlessly and publicly accused, and every body offers his opinion with all the freedom of debate. I have seen a magistrate, on the last visit of the captain-general, accused of corrupt practices,

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deposed, and prosecuted by order of the captain-general. If the poorest negro comes forward to allege his rights or his grievances, he is heard with attention, and meets with prompt and certain redress.

Such a system of laws, and such an impartial administration of them, cannot be too strongly recommended for imitation. It would require all the depth of legal knowledge, and an intimate acquaintance with all the laws of Europe and the colonies, to be able satisfactorily to demonstrate the difference which exists between the laws of the colonies of Spain and of other nations. But I believe it has never been denied that the Spanish laws of the Indies are a model of wisdom and foresight; and if the balance preponderates to any side, it is to the side of mercy and forbearance, and not to that of deliberate cruelty or manifest injustice. They consult, in every instance, the happiness of the Americans, who, in any case of doubt, are invariably perferred to the natives of Old Spain. The only error which the captains-general can with truth be accused of is, a too mild and lenient application of the penal laws,—a leniency, which, in time of revolution, becomes almost a crime; for how much blood and calamity may not sometimes be spared humanity, by the prompt and energetic execution of the penal laws?

That abuses should have existed in the Spanish colonies, as well as in the colonies of other European nations, is not surprising or singular. In what government or country on the face of the globe is it that abuses have not existed at some period of their history? It is not very many years since the governor-general of British India, the celebrated Warren Hastings, was arraigned before the British parliament, for conduct the most wanton and corrupt. Nor yet has the revolution of St. Domingo escaped our memory, which was brought on

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by the irresolute and temporizing conduct of the governor-general of that island. In 1810, the irresolution, or timidity, or mistaken humanity of the captain-general of Caraccas, gave strength to the revolution in that country, which could never have succeeded had he acted with becoming dignity and energy. The prompt measures adopted in shooting the adventurers—agents of revolution, who attempted to cause a revolt in this island, saved Puerto Rico in 1822; and the energy of the captain-general in 1823, in changing the system of government, saved it a second time from destruction. Laws are made to be obeyed; and it is humanity on the part of the magistrate to be inexorable and exact in punishing the least transgression of their sacred precepts.

STATE OF MILITARY DEFENCE.—No European colony, in any quarter of the globe, could present, in the same extent of territory, so formidable an aspect to an invading enemy as Puerto Rico. Were I to calculate merely on the almost impregnable fortress of San Juan for the defence of this island, I should commit an unpardonable error. For although these fortifications, from their locality, the great care which has been bestowed on their construction, and the number of heavy cannon which defend them, are of the first class, yet it is well known by experience that a sufficient naval and military force, properly directed, will reduce the strongest fortress in the world. But add to this fortress the immense military power which this island can present under arms, and I am persuaded that to make a conquest of it would require a force which no nation in Europe has ever yet sent, or will ever probably send across the Atlantic.

The whole of the fortifications of San Juan have undergone a perfect state of repair. The walls that had been injured by time, and by the beating of the sea, have been

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rebuilt. Several batteries which had been formerly projected have been constructed; the gun-carriages have been made anew, and every fault repaired and want supplied. The zeal, activity, and integrity of the late colonel of engineers, Don —— Ibarrola, who, unfortunately for his country, died last year, are worthy of imitation.

On the part of the officers of the royal corps of artillery, the same zeal and activity and honourable fulfilment of their duties have been manifested; all the gun-carriages have been made anew and painted; the cannon mounted where they were dismounted; and every branch connected with the profession of engineers and artillery, placed in the most effective state of active service.

Whoever has viewed the fortifications of Puerto Rico must feel surprised that, in the year 1797, the English, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with a force of scarcely 10,000 men, should lay siege to this place,—a force not sufficient to form a line along the coast on the opposite side of the bay, to prevent provisions from being sent to the garrison from the surrounding country. Sir Ralph's object in landing, surely, could only have been to try whether he could surprise or intimidate the scanty garrison by which it was defended. However, from what I have been able to learn on this subject, it appears, that had he not re-embarked very soon, he would have had to repent his temerity; for the shipping could not safely remain at anchor where there was no harbour, and where a dangerous coast threatened their destruction. His communication with the country was cut off by the armed peasantry, who rose *en masse*, and, to the number of not less than 20,000, threw themselves into the fortress in less than a week after the invasion; so that the British forces would most undoubtedly have been obliged to surrender at discretion, had the commander not effected a timely retreat.

An enemy who should attempt to possess himself of

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the island, with the object of cutting off all supplies to the garrison of San Juan, in order to reduce it to submission by hunger, would be very much mistaken in his calculations, as will be perceived by the following enumeration of the distribution of the regular and militia force and corps of volunteers and yeomanry. Of regular militia alone, 10,000, well disciplined, and completely armed and equipped, could be marched to any point of the island in twelve hours after the first alarm gun was fired.

This island is divided into seven military departments, each of which is under the command of a colonel of the regular army, who is also first commandant of the battalion of disciplined militia of his respective department. They, together with the other field and staff officers of these corps who are also regular officers, receive pay, and rank as such. These corps are well armed and appointed; and with respect to their state of discipline, they march and manœuvre with nearly the precision of veteran troops. They parade every Sunday, and the captain-general reviews them every six months. The regular troops are natives of Old Spain, and are a fine body of young men. The veteran companies of artillery are also natives of Old Spain. The corps of volunteers is composed of merchants and shopkeepers, principally natives of Old Spain. The seven battalions of disciplined militia, the regiment of cavalry, and two companies of artillery, are natives of the country, whites; for all people of colour are rigorously excluded by the regulations of these corps, who pride themselves on being the pure descendants of the Spaniards. This laudable pride, the spirit of national glory which characterizes them, and their hatred to every thing like revolution, will make them add a new laurel wreath to the Spanish arms if a foreign foe should ever land on their shores.

I shall now display the military force of the island,

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divided into a moveable, active, and disciplined force—and that which, not being in the same state of discipline, could be serviceable behind walls, in ambuscades, and in every species of desultory warfare, so destructive to an invading enemy:—

Military Force regularly armed and disciplined.

A brigade of regular artillery, consisting of two companies of veteran artillery-men; two ditto of white militia artillery men; and two of free coloured men,—making a total of . . .	1110
One regiment of Spanish infantry of the line .	1210
Seven battalions of disciplined militia infantry .	7423
One regiment of disciplined militia cavalry .	614
Total	10,357

Irregular Force.

323 companies of yeomanry, consisting of 1008 officers and 34,634 soldiers, making a total of	37,642
Retired, but who could take arms if necessary .	4768
Aforrados de guerra	2882
Corps of volunteers, consisting of merchants and shopkeepers	500
	45,792

Navy.

One commandant,—one post captain,—one arsenal captain,—fifteen captains of post,—and 2052 seamen,—making 2060 seamen of all classes; with twelve gun-boats, mounting two guns and a howitzer, and a man of war schooner.

Total Disposable Force of the Island.

Disciplined armed military force . . .	10,357
Undisciplined force and volunteers . .	45,792
Naval force	2060
	58,209

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This is a formidable array of effective numbers, on which the government can count with certainty. It is unnecessary to demonstrate that an armament of this kind, on their own ground, united among themselves, and knowing the grievances and humiliation they would have to suffer from a victorious enemy, would repel any force that could be sent against them. An enemy landing in Puerto Rico would at every step have to force a defile, or fall into an ambuscade. The valleys formed by the mountains, and separated from each other by hills, most of them covered with wood, present a continual succession of formidable positions of defence against an attacking enemy. A European army, exposed to the influence of the climate, the burning noon-day sun, and the deadly dews of night, would soon diminish in numbers. Besides, the continual night attacks of the armed peasantry, acquainted with every path, by cutting off stragglers, intercepting the supplies, and keeping the enemy in continual alarm, would in a few months destroy the best European army that ever was organized. Any person acquainted with military affairs knows that this desultory warfare, and particularly in a tropical climate, is the most destructive to regular troops. Tactics and discipline are of little avail in mountain warfare. It was this system persevered in, and the unconquerable spirit of national honour, which made the Spanish guerillas, in the war of independence, triumph over the veteran legions of Napoleon. Upon such a system, and on a perseverance in their loyal principles, must the natives of Puerto Rico rely to secure them from the ignominy of a foreign yoke.

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CHAPTER V.

Commerce of Puerto Rico—Merchants and Shopkeepers—Contraband Traffic—Liberal Regulations of the Government—Comparative View of Imports and Exports in 1803, 1810, 1830, *and* 1831—*Duties levied on Spanish and Foreign Goods—Paralyzing Effects of the Subsidy in Specie formerly remitted from Mexico—Commerce of the Island with different Nations—with the English, French, and Danish Islands—Remarks on the Piratical System fostered by the Inhabitants of St. Thomas—Trade with the United States—with France—with England—with Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Sardinia—German Trade—Coasting Trade—Commerce with Spain—Remarks on Protecting Duties—Free Trade—Revenue of the Island—Direct Taxes—Taxes on Cockpits, Billiard Rooms, &c.—Land Tax—Various other Taxes—Custom-house Duties—Revenue of the Navy—Municipal Duties—Remarks on the evil Effects of sanctioning Lotteries—Comparison of Taxes in the Spanish and other West India Colonies.*

I HAVE already observed in a previous chapter, that the reader is not to expect to find in Puerto Rico the active and flourishing commerce which is carried on in the capitals of the large agricultural and commercial islands of Cuba

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and Jamaica. The commerce of this island must necessarily keep pace with its progress in agriculture, with the increasing industry of the inhabitants, the augmentation of capital, and the encouragement held out to the national and foreign merchant.

Whatever goods are introduced into this island beyond what are necessary for the wants and consumption of the population, must lie on the hands of the importer, and the exportations must of course be circumscribed to the surplus productions of the land. As the island increases in agricultural riches, we find the artificial wants of the people gradually augmenting. Every succeeding year offers to our view a large increase of productions beyond the year that preceded it; and we now behold a consumption of goods and manufactures to an amount almost incredible in an island which, a few years ago, was supplied with the few goods the inhabitants were able to purchase by a contraband trade.

The impossibility of obtaining exact documents, by which I might have been able to trace the history of the commerce of this island from a remote period, obliges me to confine my investigations to a limited space, and to those authorities upon which I can place implicit reliance. I therefore present the only official data which I have been able to collect from the archives of the intendancy subsequent to the year 1803, which will afford some idea of the former state of commerce, and its regular advances up to the present day.

The merchants of this island may be classed under two distinct heads. First, those who are consignees for European and American vessels, and receive a commission for the sale and purchase of their cargoes. Secondly, those who with capitals of their own, or with credit, purchase goods, and again retail them in their shops, or sell them to the

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smaller shopkeepers of the towns and villages of the interior. With the exception of two or three individuals, I do not know any one who can be called a wholesale merchant in the whole island. They are all importers and retailers of their own goods, and their concerns are all on a small scale. This is a proof of the great want of capital. The principal shopkeepers go generally every three months to St. Thomas, and make assortments of dry goods; and thence supply the shopkeepers of the interior who are generally connected with them; but since vessels came direct from England, France, and Germany, the importation of goods from St. Thomas has considerably decreased. The greater number of those employed in this traffic are Catalans. Every town and village is full of shops; and even on the highway shops are frequently seen, with dry goods, earthenware, wine, liquors, plantains, and other fruits of the country, promiscuously mixed together. These minor shopkeepers purchase coffee, cotton, tobacco, and cattle, from the country people, in exchange for goods to clothe their families, and salt fish, hog's lard, and other foreign provisions. They are generally the purchasers for the more extensive commission merchants of the sea-ports, who load the vessels to foreign countries. Thus a continued chain of mutual commercial dependence is established throughout the island, which circulates capital and promotes industry.

The vessels coming direct from France, England, and Germany, have their consignees, who are generally Spaniards, unless the owner or supercargo is naturalized; otherwise, he is obliged to form a firm with a Spaniard,—for no foreigner, unless naturalized, can make purchases or sales in his own name. But a foreigner residing five years in the Spanish dominions, is entitled to be naturalized, and to enjoy all the rights and privileges of a Spanish merchant.

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From what I have been able to learn, I am convinced that the value both of the importations and exportations exceeds the amount which appears in the custom-house returns; for the generality of goods are valued for the payment of duties under their real value, although there are exceptions to this rule in many articles. If we also take into consideration the contraband trade which is carried on with St. Thomas, this will appear more evident. This is an evil that cannot be suppressed entirely, even by the greatest vigilance of the authorities, unless duties are lowered on manufactured goods and merchandize generally, which, by taking away the profit arising from illicit commerce, would destroy the temptation to engage in it. Few persons would embark in an enterprise of danger without the hope of high reward. For example, foreign goods pay 17 per cent. importation duties, *ad valorem.* If the shopkeepers in the towns on the coast can, by paying 8½ per cent. to the smugglers, get their goods landed and put safely on their shelves, they will most certainly run the risk of seizure for the remaining 8½ per cent. that they would have to pay to the custom-house; which 8½ per cent. being clear profit, without any farther speculation and retail, would be a handsome profit on their goods. But they run, in fact, very little risk by smuggling, for there are no revenue vessels to watch the coast, which is full of creeks and ports where large boats may enter and sail without being perceived. This temptation to smuggling is one of the many convincing arguments urged by those who have written on this subject against the erroneous policy of the imposition of heavy duties, which defeat the purposes which they were intended to promote,—the increase of the revenue.

Notwithstanding the contraband trade, however, and

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the imposition of heavy duties, this island has made great advances in commercial importance. The Spanish government, with a liberality that does it honour, opened the ports of this island and Cuba to the vessels of every friendly power. The planters are not limited in the sale of their produce; they may ship it to any part of the world where they expect to find the best market. They are at liberty to refine their sugar on their estates, or ship it in its unrefined state, as best may suit their interest or convenience. The French and English planters were prohibited from refining their own sugar, nor could they make choice of a market; they had to ship it to the mother country, whether the market was good or bad. England has since perceived the error of this unjust monopoly, and has opened the ports of the West India islands to the vessels of foreign powers, under certain limitations and restrictions; but no manufactory for refining sugar exists in any of her colonies. Sugar is shipped in its raw state, and refined in England, thus employing many thousand individuals in the mother country who would otherwise be without bread. I have made this digression as it serves to show that Spain has not been the only nation that aimed at exclusive trade with her colonies.

I now proceed to give an enumeration of the vessels that entered and sailed from the ports of this island, with their tonnage, in 1830 and 1831. The country vessels are not included, for as they are few, and only carry provisions to market, they are of little importance in a commercial point of view.

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Vessels and Tonnage of different flags that entered in 1830 *and* 1831.

	1830.				1831.			
	Entrd.	Tons.	Sailed.	Tons.	Entered.	Tons.	Sailed.	Tons.
Spanish	840	15,163	975	19,98 5	1026	27,891	1016	25,056
French	87	5790	92	7059	71	4523½	79	5140½
American . . .	213	29,906	211	29,405	228	28,798½	229	29,165½
English	36	4103	36	4217	37	3811	39	4031½
Hamburgh . .	7	1184	8	1364	6	1259	7	1571
Danish	25	1522	24	1452	33	3424	29	3033
Swedish . . .	4	323	5	332	8	350	8	350
Sardinian . . .	2	284	2	284	3	420	2	322
Dutch	7	251	6	302	7	513	7	513
Haytian					2	145	3	161½
Bremen,Germ.	7	1,184	8	1,364	4	606	6	908
Total	1228	59,710	1367	65,764	1425	71,740½	1425	70,251½

In 1803, the value of the produce exported amounted only to 57,500 dollars, in the following articles:—

2632 quintals coffee.
1416 do. sugar.
972 do. tobacco.
917 do. cotton.
772 do. grain.
124 do. spices.
2600 do. Guaycan wood.
1080 undressed hides.
1356 logs of wood.
70 horses and mules.

The same year the importations amounted to 450,000 dollars.

In 1810, the exportations amounted to 662,630 dollars, in sugar, coffee, tobacco, cotton, and other productions of the island; and the importations to 1,005,694 dollars, distributed as follows:—

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	Dollars.
In provisions	343,064
In all kinds of dry goods and merchandize	662,630
Making	1,005,694

This is the result of the commerce carried on in foreign vessels, and with foreign countries, under Spanish colours, to the port of the capital of the island, the only port that was licensed by government at that period. I do not include the merchandize and produce of the Peninsula and of Spanish America; for, in consequence of the royal decree of the 28th February, 1789, they were declared free of duties, and as they were not valued at the custom-house there is no possibility of ascertaining their value.

In the year 1813, his Majesty deemed it necessary to establish an intendancy in Puerto Rico, in order to reduce the administration of the revenue to a regular system. Until this period, as has been stated in the preceding chapter, the captain-general had the superintendence of the revenue. There was no authorized port but the capital. No regular books were kept by the authorities; a day-book of duties paid and expended, was only considered necessary. Goods were smuggled to every part of the coast; the treasury chest was empty; and the government officers and troops were reduced to a very small portion of their pay. From the establishment of the intendancy regular accounts were kept; and from the commencement *five* custom-houses were established, besides that which already existed in the capital—to wit, the port of Fajardo, on the north-east coast; Cabo Rojo, Aguadilla, and Mayagues on the west; and Ponce on the south. But notwithstanding the establishment of the intendancy, the good effects of it were very slowly

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perceived. There were continual variations in the system adopted; every month produced a new commercial tariff. Every attempt to prevent smuggling by increasing the duties, only served to give it more vigour. There was much mismanagement and much malversation in the custom-houses. One intendant, from a wish to correct abuses, or from a spirit of innovation, often applied to the court for the cancelling of the regulations of his predecessor; so that, from the concurring effects of contraband trade and mismanagement, commerce suffered, and, consequently, the country became impoverished. The first year after the establishment of the intendancy, the different custom-houses produced as follows:—

Value of Importations and Exportations through the Custom House in 1814.

CUSTOM HOUSES.	IMPORTATIONS. Dollars.	R.	M.	EXPORTATIONS. Dollars.	R.	M.
Capital	617,651	1	27	214,595	5	4
Mayagues	115,794	7	21	92,514	5	0
Ponce	52,392	6	19	65,683	5	19
Aguadilla	52,623	2	9	70,132	0	17
Fajardo	21,907	5	0	41,722	2	14
Cabo Rojo	9,079	0	0	16,192	0	20
	869,448	7	8	500,840	3	6

	Dollars.	R.	M.
Total Importations	869,448	7	8
Total Exportations	500,840	3	6
Difference in favour of Importations	368,608	4	2

The inhabitants of different towns on the coast, imagining that they had also a right to have custom-houses for the exportation of their produce, and forming very erroneous calculations of the benefits arising from it, petitioned for a concession which they urged would encou-

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rage agriculture, by facilitating the exportation of the produce to foreign countries. The government, ever ready to accede to the wishes of the inhabitants, and, if I may use the expression, too indulgent, has established, up to the present day, six custom-houses, and ten authorized ports, where vessels from foreign countries may discharge their cargoes, and clear out without the intervention or cognizance of any superior authority.

The following are the names of the ports in which custom-houses and receptories have been opened :—

NORTH COAST.	SOUTH.		WEST.	EAST.
The Capital.	Ponce.	Patillas.	Mayagues.	Fajardo.
Loisa.	Guayama.	Guayanilla.	Aguadilla.	Naguabo.
Arecibo.	Salinas.	Peñula.	Cabo Rojo.	Humacao.

The pernicious effects of such a multiplication of custom-houses were soon severely felt. Such was the low state of the revenue in 1825, and such the malversation in the public money, that the captain-general, in order to be able to attend to the defence of the island, menaced by foreign invasion, was compelled to charge the military commandants to prevent the smuggling in their respective departments by the most active exertion of their authority. In order to prevent fraud and peculation at the custom-houses and receptories, some of the emigrants from the Spanish main, known for intelligence and probity, were placed in each custom-house, to watch over and counteract illicit proceedings. This measure produced the effect of enchantment; the next year the duties were nearly doubled in value, and from that moment they have progressively increased. The evils which the opening of this excessive number of ports to foreign exportation and importation has caused, and must always necessarily cause, will be further adverted to in this chapter.

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Amount of Imports and Exports from 1803 *to* 1830.

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Difference in favour of Exports.	Amount of Duties.
	Ps.	Ps.		
1803	450,000	57,500		
1810	1,005,694	662,570		
1814	869,448 7 9	500,840		
1828	2,039,928	2,590,726 7 9	550,798 5 4	522,034 6 16
1829	2,220,340 3	2,821,893 1 25	601,552 6 25	
1830	2,208,941	3,411,845 3 11	1,202,903 6 1	

Duties paid by Spanish and Foreign Vessels, in the Custom-house of Puerto Rico.

The duties paid by foreign and Spanish vessels proceeding from any of the West India islands on imports, are as follows:—

Dry goods . . . . 17 per cent. on the value.
Soap . . . . . 52 per cent. on do.
Ship tackle, ropes, sails, &c. 7 dollars, 1 real, per quintal.
Provisions . . . . . 12 per cent. on the value.
Wheat flour . . . . 3 dollars, 5 reals, per barrel.
Indian corn or rye . . 4 reals per barrel.
Salt . . . . . 1 dollar per fanega.

Agricultural instruments pay 5 per cent. ad valorem; besides they pay a duty for the repairs of streets. Every fanega of cocoa pays one dollar to the fund for the support of emigrants. One dollar per cent. additional for the fund of Amortization, is paid by earthenware, butter, cheese, all kinds of liquors and foreign wines, tobacco, dried fruits, glass, leather, boots and shoes, hardware, spermaceti candles, oil of olives, fans, checks, silk stockings. Corn, meal, barley, and salt, pay 2 dollars per cent. additional for the debt of Reimbursement.

These vessels pay on exports, 6 per cent.; with the exception of timber of the first class, which pays 21 per

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cent.; of the second class, which pays 16 per cent.; and of full-grown horned cattle, which pay 3 dollars per head; while sheep, goats, &c. only pay 6 reals each.

Spanish vessels, from Spanish ports where a consul resides, pay 7 per cent. ad valorem of all the cargo, besides the duty for the repair of streets. Wheat flour, besides paying 7 per cent. ad valorem, pays 11 reals, 1 mar., to the cathedral, and 1 dollar for the construction of barracks. On exportation they pay 4 per cent.

Spanish vessels, from Spanish ports in America, pay 4 per cent. ad valorem on goods imported, besides the duty for the repair of streets. They pay an export duty of 3 per cent.

Foreign vessels, from the same ports, pay 5 per cent. and the street duty, and an export duty of 6 per cent.; but if the shipment is made by Spanish subjects on their own account, they only pay 4 per cent.

Spanish vessels proceeding from the Peninsula, according to a late decree of the king, pay on imports 6 per cent., and on exports, 1 per cent., besides contributing to the repair of streets. For foreign vessels from the Peninsula there are no regulations.

All vessels that discharge the whole or part of their cargoes have to pay four dollars to the repair of the wharf, and 1 per cent. balance on the total of the duties of importation and exportation.

Vessels belonging to the Island.

Government vessels:—1 armed schooner, 12 gunboats, and several boats.

Private property:—14 brigs, 34 schooners, 77 sloops, 8 launches, 8 rafts, 36 piraguas, 73 canoes, 94 boats in the capital.

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All the tonnage of vessels that entered in 1830, amounted to 65,670½ tons, of which, 22,482½ tons were under Spanish colours, and 43,188 tons under foreign.

Amount of Imports and Exports of Puerto Rico in three Years.

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Duties paid.
	Dollars.	Dollars.	Dollars.
1828	2,039,928¼	2,590,726½	522,034¾
1829	2,220,340	2,821,893	536,544
1830	2,208,941½	3,411,845½	584,990¼
Total.	6,469,209¾	8,824,465	1,643,569

The increase in the mercantile operations of this island may be dated from the epoch of 1815, when his Majesty promulgated that beneficent decree which held out protection and encouragement to industry and capital, and gave the first great impulse to agriculture and commerce. For even so late as 1810, we find that the imports exceed three times the sum of the produce exported,—that is to say, that the produce of agriculture was not sufficient to give in exchange for the manufactured goods imported; the difference in value was supplied by the ready money sent from Mexico, which made only a transient stay in the island. This proves evidently that the annual subsidy received from Mexico paralyzed the industry of the inhabitants, who, confiding solely in this supply for the purchase of provisions, clothing, implements of husbandry, and articles for domestic use, neglected almost entirely the sterling riches which really existed in the fertility of their soil,—thus depending on the caprice of a foreign market for the necessaries of life. Fortunately for Puerto Rico this subsidy ceased; for had it been continued to the present day, perhapsthe island would still

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in a great measure depend on foreign succour. This is one of the many examples that might be offered to prove the fallacy of the ancient doctrines that regarded specie as the real wealth of a country, whereas all modern writers who have considered the precious metals in their true light, look upon them only as a commodious species of merchandise which facilitates exchanges better than any other. The quantity of specie more or less beyond what is necessary for the circulation of a country, is of no value to a nation more than any other goods. The value of industry, and the productive force of a country in agriculture, are the true criterion of its riches; and a country must be rich or poor according to the extent of its cultivated fields and the skill of its manufactories. From these two sources must all the markets of the world be supplied—on these must every nation that wishes to be great ground its power and supremacy. This truth, so generally acknowledged at the present day, is illustrated by the living example of this island, which during the long period that it received a subsidy from Mexico, was miserably poor; but which, when this subsidy ceased, not receiving a farthing from abroad, solely depending on her own industry and resources, has become gradually rich and flourishing.

In examining the exports and imports, we find that in latter years, the exports, or speaking more clearly, the produce of the land exported, exceeds considerably the value of goods and provisions imported. This balance in favour of the exports is paid by foreigners in specie. The value of the coffee exported this year amounts to upwards of two millions of dollars, much of which is paid for in ready money. The cattle exported by foreign merchants for other colonies are also generally paid for in cash; and a great deal of this money is again carried by the

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smugglers to St. Thomas, and laid out in merchandise. Thus the island always has the balance of trade in its favour.

The agricultural districts of Ponce and Mayagues are those which, with the exception of the capital, export most produce, and import the greatest value in manufactured goods,—while some of the receptories, particularly that of Loisa, to the windward of the capital, exhibit in exports and imports a sum so truly contemptible that it is a mockery of commerce to include them in the number of authorized ports.

The commerce of all the nations which traded to this island in 1830, runs in the following proportions, with respect to the amount, ad valorem, of imports and exports, according to which duties are exacted at the custom-houses.

Proportions of Imports and Exports of the different Nations.

NATIONS.	ON IMPORTS.	ON EXPORTS.
Spain	12⅛ per cent.	6⅞ per cent.
Coasters between the islands	53½ do.	25⅛ do.
American	27¼ do.	49 do.
English	2¾ do.	5⅛ do.
French	2⅝ do.	6⅝ do.
German, Bremen, Hamburgh	1¼ do.	5¾ do.
Dutch, Danish, Sardinian, Swedish	½ do.	2¹¹⁄₁₆ do.

TRADE WITH THE ENGLISH, FRENCH, AND DANISH ISLANDS.—The trade with these colonies, but particularly with the Danish island of St. Thomas, is considerable.

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In 1828, the imports from St. Thomas and the other islands in manufactured goods, amounted to 1,364,431 dollars, 6 re., 29 mar.; and the exports to 843,964 doll., 1 re., 10 mar. In the year 1830, the imports amounted to 1,181,446 dollars, 3 reals, 25 mar., and the exports to 885,916 dollars, 2 re., 18 mar.; which makes 53½ per cent. of the total amount of importations for that year, and 25⅞ per cent. on the total amount of exportations,—amounting to more than one-half of the whole value imported, and one-fourth of the exports. The exports to the French and English islands consist principally of cattle, mules, and horses, of which they generally receive yearly, through the custom-houses, to the value of 22,000 dollars, which is chiefly paid in specie. The trade with St. Thomas is carried on by small schooners and sloops under Spanish colours, and in foreign vessels. From that commercial depôt all kinds of manufactured goods and foreign produce are imported; and, in return, they export cattle, hides, coffee, sugar, molasses, timber, &c. The quantity of goods which is smuggled into this island from St. Thomas may be computed at one-half of the amount of what is legally imported. As long as St. Thomas continues to be a free port, so long will this pernicious traffic continue, unless measures are adopted to counterbalance its effects.

One of the best and most obvious means of turning the tide of commerce from St. Thomas to this island, is that which the intendant proposes carrying into effect; namely, by establishing a general depôt in the capital for European goods, both Spanish and foreign, as well as for the cocoa of South America and other countries. A capacious edifice is now actually building for the depôt, outside the walls close to the wharf, with a capacious cistern in order to supply the ships with water; and it is

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contemplated to charge two per cent. ad valorem on the importation of goods, and the same amount on the exportation. But in order that this establishment may be of public utility, which no doubt it will be if properly managed, the duties on the importation of goods direct from Europe must be lowered, and heavier duties exacted from the same class of goods coming from the colonies. Every unnecessary restriction must be taken off, and every inducement held out to make it the interest of foreign merchants to deposit their goods at Puerto Rico. When this depôt is formed, and solidly established, and the exact expenses of duties and port charges fixed, St. Thomas, where neither wood nor water, nor provisions nor other produce are raised, will be deserted. This step is imperatively called for, in order to suppress effectively the contraband trade now carried on by the small vessels which in a few hours cross over from St. Thomas,—a trade which all the vigilance of the authorities cannot at present prevent, for there are too many interested in its continuance. It is to be hoped that if foreign merchandize in the depôt pays two per cent., the goods of the Peninsula will only be charged, at most, one-half that rate, and indeed it would be better were they only to pay the expense of storage.

Every person acquainted with the situation of this island must be convinced of the advantages that will necessarily arise from this prudent regulation. Constituting the Havannah into a free port, has given the island of Cuba an importance in the mercantile world which otherwise it could not have attained. Had this step not been taken, Jamaica would have remained till this day the centre of all the mercantile operations with Mexico, Carthagena, St. Martha, and the province of Yucatan, and Cuba would have had still to receive her supplies

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from Jamaica as Puerto Rico now receives them from St. Thomas. This latter island does not enjoy the local advantages of Jamaica. It has no internal resources, no indigenous productions, not even a rivulet of water to supply the shipping; and yet it has for many years been the emporium of trade in this part of the West Indies. From it commerce extends its flight over South America, and from its stores this island was formerly, and even at the present day is still, principally supplied with manufactured goods; and, until within a few months, Spanish vessels had to take in cargoes of cocoa there for the Peninsula,—leaving all the advantages of ready money, port duties, commission, &c., in a foreign market.

Had the merchants of St. Thomas limited their speculations to the beaten road of fair and honourable traffic, the annals of their free port would be without a stain. But sorry I am to say, that it harboured in its bosom a band of pirates—and many a dark deed will they have to answer for before the awful tribunal of their Maker. It was the focus from which privateers were manned and equipped; from whence, under the specious cloak of a free and neutral port, they sallied forth, and committed unpardonable depredations on Spanish commerce, and even inhumanly pillaged and burnt the small fishing-boats of the coasts. Their atrocities extended to other nations. These pirates were nurtured, covered, and protected by individuals calling themselves merchants, who participated largely in the spoil. The discovery of a piratical act committed on a British merchantman, fortunately unmasked the whole iniquitous system, and subjected some of the wretches who were taken to the vengeance of the law. Many of those who stood high in mercantile fame were discovered to have aided and abetted

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these crimes. For the sake of their friends I suppress their names. The acts committed are of the darkest dye; humanity shudders at the recital. The toleration even for a day of these privateers or pirates, composed of the worst and most abandoned men, is a stigma on the maritime nations. Would to God that all the nations of the world would, by a common accord, abolish privateering, and punish all privateers as pirates and robbers. It remained for the British Admiral Fleming to effect the total extirpation of the scourge of Colombian privateers from the high seas; he declared that any Colombian privateer that he should find cruising three months after his notification, should be treated as a pirate; and I believe the French Admiral made a declaration to the same effect. These measures, however, were adopted too late, when the Spanish commerce to this island was nearly ruined, and not until the pirates of all nations, disguised and protected by the free flag of Colombia, had commenced destroying and plundering the vessels of the English—the protectors of the new republics.

I have made this digression because the trade of this island suffered considerably during the period of these maritime disorders, and to shew that the port and inhabitants of St. Thomas did not study their interest in affording shelter to these pirates; for St. Thomas depends chiefly on this island for wood, water, and provisions—and Puerto Rico is now the principal purchaser of the goods of its stores. Since the ports of the British West Indies have been opened to American shipping the port of St. Thomas has become comparatively deserted, and the day is perhaps not far distant when that scorched and barren rock will become again what it was intended to be by nature—the abode of fishermen.

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TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—The trade which is carried on between the United States and Puerto Rico is more advantageous to the latter than that of any other nation. In 1829, 225 American vessels entered the ports of this island, and in 1830, 213; and the same years respectively, 215 and 211 sailed. In 1828, the whole amount of the importations from America was 447,118 doll., 3 reals, 27 mar.; in 1830, 602,390 doll., 1 real, 10 mar. And the exportations in 1828 amounted to 1,094,356 doll., 7 reals, 5 mar.; in 1830, 1,680,857 doll. 7 reals, 14 mar.; leaving a clear balance in 1830, in favour of the island, paid in specie, of 1,078,467 doll., 6 reals, 3 mar. The American trade embraced, in 1830, 27¼ per cent. of the total imports, and 49 per cent. of the exports. The importations from America are not in luxuries, but in the necessaries of life,—such as salt fish, flour, butter, lard, grain, lumber, staves, and articles of furniture.

America is most happily situated for carrying on a trade with the West India islands. In my humble opinion, a good understanding and a friendly intercourse with that country is of great importance to the commercial interests of this island. Although the very depressed state of the price of sugar makes it necessary that the planters of Puerto Rico should raise a supply of provisions for the maintenance of their negroes, and consequently smaller supplies will be required from America, yet mutual interest will maintain the commerce with the United States as the most certain and lucrative foreign trade of this island, as well as being highly advantageous to both countries.

The importations from America do not consist of such toys, and baubles, and puppets, as are received from France, which either remain a dead loss to the capital

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of the island, or form at best an unproductive capital. America supplies the planters with boards for their houses, and staves for their sugar hogsheads and rum puncheons. These staves constitute an active circulating capital, and are again sold to the importer, in the shape of casks, filled with the produce of the country. Sugar could not be manufactured, nor rum distilled, were there not the means of exporting it: its elaboration would be limited to meet the consumption of the inhabitants. The chief articles with which this island supplies America, are sugar, rum, molasses, and coffee.

From this hurried survey of the exports from this island to the American continent, it is obvious that the United States, besides affording an inexhaustible and cheap supply, is also the best and surest market for the disposal of the planters' productions, for which there is not a sufficient sale either in the Peninsula, or in the rest of Europe. On whatever side, therefore, this trade is considered, it will be found that this island receives the chief benefit resulting from it; for the sugar planters, when sugar bore so high a price as to render the less productive culture of provisions only a secondary consideration, were cheaply and regularly supplied with food of every description, which allowed them to turn their attention to the cultivation of more profitable productions. This is one of the causes why, with so few slaves, such a quantity of cane is under cultivation, and why the revenue and general commerce have been proportionally augmented and extended. The American trade in 1830, forms nearly one-third of the whole of the value of importations, and nearly one-half of the whole exportations. An American consul resides at the capital, and all the principal ports have deputy consuls.

TRADE WITH FRANCE.—The trade with France can-

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not be considered either extensive or advantageous. In 1830, 87 vessels entered from France and her colonies, measuring 5790 tons; and 92 sailed, measuring 7059; and they imported to the amount of 57,958 dollars, and exported to the value of 228,014 dollars. The imports consist principally of linens, cambrics, ladies' dresses and ornaments, toys, and jewellery of the most unsubstantial kind, which leaves no solid wealth in the country in exchange for the produce which they carry away. Such a trade must always be unfavourable to the island. The French trade in 1830, formed $2\frac{5}{8}$ per cent. of the imports, and $6\frac{5}{8}$ of the exports.

Since the revolution of 1793, which so completely relaxed every moral principle among the French, they have endeavoured to disseminate their immoral maxims all over the world, and by obscene books and prints to excite the passions of the youth of both sexes. These books and prints, although prohibited under severe penalties, are notwithstanding introduced, and do incalculable injury. It is not only the interest of the government to watch with an unsleeping eye over those pernicious practices which undermine the very basis of society,—it is also the interest and duty of parents, and of every honest man, to inform the magistrates whenever they see any of these diabolical prints or books; for they strike at the root of society, at domestic virtue; they corrupt and vitiate the heart and pervert the understanding.

TRADE WITH ENGLAND.—The direct trade with England has considerably increased within the last two or three years. However, as the British colonies abound with tropical productions, it is not to be expected that she can export great quantities of the produce of this island. The greater part of the cotton goods and hardware which are imported from St. Thomas are of

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British manufacture. England thus finds in Puerto Rico, by an indirect course, a market for the produce of her industry. The value of cotton goods legally imported in 1830, amounted to 325,792 dollars, and the value of the hardware imported amounted to 45,074 dollars. The same year, 36 vessels entered direct from England and her colonies, measuring 4103 tons, and 36 sailed, measuring 4217. They imported to the amount of 60,720 dollars, and exported to 153,891 dollars. The proportion of English trade in 1830, amounted to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the imports, and $5\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. of the exports. England imports cotton goods, Irish linen, hardware, earthenware, &c.; and the exports consist in coffee and sugar, and cattle for their supply of her colonies.

TRADE WITH HOLLAND, DENMARK, SWEDEN, AND SARDINIA.—The trade carried on with these countries is so very inconsiderable that I have placed them under one head. In 1830, 7 Dutch vessels entered, measuring 251 tons; and 6 sailed, measuring 302 tons. They imported to the value of 1288 pesos, 2 reals, 16 quartos, and exported produce to the amount of 73,587 dollars, 12 reals. Twenty-five Danish vessels, measuring 1522 tons, entered in 1830, and 24, measuring 1452 tons, sailed; importing the value of 8456 dollars, and exporting produce to the amount of 73,587 dollars.

The same year, 4 Swedish vessels entered, measuring 323 tons, and 5 sailed, measuring 332 tons, which imported to the amount of 543 dollars, and exported produce to the amount of 390 dollars.

Two vessels under Sardinian colours entered, measuring 284 tons, and the same number sailed. They introduced goods to the amount of 594 dollars, and carried off produce to the value of 15,302 dollars.

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The aggregate of the trade carried on with these four nations, only amounts to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the total of imports, and $2\frac{5}{8}$ of the exports.

GERMAN TRADE.—It is but very lately that vessels direct from Hamburgh and Bremen have come to this island. They used formerly to discharge their cargoes at St. Thomas; but now the German merchants have found out the advantages of a direct communication. In 1830, seven vessels from the above-mentioned ports, measuring 1184 tons, arrived; and eight sailed, measuring 1364 tons. They imported the value of 27,726 pesos, and exported to the amount of 136,048 dollars, in produce, paying the balance in specie. This trade forms $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. of the whole importations, and $5\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the exportations. The imports consist in linens, glass, sword-blades, hams, beer, &c. This trade, although at present inconsiderable, promises to become brisk and flourishing, as vessels coming direct to this island avoid unnecessary delay, and save unavoidable expenses of re-shipments and double commissions.

COASTING TRADE.—In consequence of the number of custom-houses and ports where revenue officers are stationed, who have power to clear out vessels for every part of the world without the intervention of any superior authority, this important branch of navigation can scarcely be said to exist in this island. Fifteen authorized ports, where vessels may discharge their cargoes, must prevent the vigorous exertion of the native seamen, who, under this erroneous system, can never rise beyond the class of fishermen, nor increase beyond the number which that occupation can employ. The only vessels employed along the coasts are small boats to carry provisions to market, which are scarcely worthy of notice in a commercial point

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of view. All maritime nations (and Spain is, beyond doubt, intended by nature to be one of the greatest maritime powers of Europe,) should endeavour to promote the navigation of the coasts. It is the best nursery for seamen; and without a merchant navy, no country can become a maritime power. Where can experienced seamen be otherwise found in time of war? It is of importance to this island, and to the nation, that the coasting trade should be encouraged and fostered. It would afford employment to a great number of men who are idle, circulate capital, and impart life to commerce and navigation. Three hundred small vessels, of from 25 to 50 tons, might find employment during the crops, and at other seasons make voyages to the colonies (which are at present made in foreign bottoms); and they would employ from 1400 to 1600 seamen.

The number of authorized ports for exports and imports is an evil which is not confined to the injury it inflicts on the progress of navigation, by destroying the coasting trade. It has a direct tendency towards diminishing the revenue, and affords, if I may use the expression, a legal protection to smuggling. The greater the number of ports authorized by government, the greater is the facility afforded to illicit commerce. It is not so easy for the chief of the revenue to extend his vigilance over fifteen ports, as he might over three or four. But even were there no smuggling carried on, it uselessly multiplies employments, which consume an enormous sum of the public money, without promoting agriculture or commerce, or increasing the revenue. I have heard it frequently observed, that the greater the number of authorized ports, the greater would be the facility given to the exportation of the produce of the land. Under certain

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circumstances this doctrine might be practically useful; as it stands at present with respect to this island, it is highly injurious. The exportation of produce would be equally promoted by employing coasting vessels, the public welfare would be consulted by encouraging a most useful branch of trade and navigation, and the revenue would increase by diminishing the channels of carrying on a contraband trade. Even were there no duties to be paid on the exportation of produce, or on the importation of foreign merchandize, I am still of opinion, that a large number of authorized ports would be disadvantageous to the nation, by throwing out of employment a number of mariners. But whilst heavy duties are paid both on the importations and the exportations, and the accumulation of money is the great object of so many individuals, this excess in the number of authorized ports, within a few leagues of coast, is injurious to navigation and commerce, and has a direct tendency towards diminishing the public revenue.

I am not fond of making comparisons, unless where they serve to illustrate a question; but I cannot help citing the island of Jamaica, as an example to prove what I have just stated. That island is much larger than this, its agricultural riches are also infinitely greater, and its commerce more than seven times more extensive; yet it has but one authorized port, from whence vessels are cleared out, and all vessels bound to the island must first touch there, give in their manifest, pay the duties thereon, &c., before they can proceed to any other part of the coast. Vessels may take in their cargoes on the coast, but they must be cleared out at the principal custom-house. Thus a number of small vessels are continually employed in the coasting trade, and very few individuals are employed in the custom-house. I am convinced that the suppression of all the authorized ports in this island, for foreign exports

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and imports, with the exception of two or three, would be a measure of public utility; smuggling would be diminished, and the island would reap the incalculable advantages of an active coasting trade.

COMMERCE WITH SPAIN.—I have left the Spanish commerce to the end of this section, that I might have an opportunity of treating it more fully. I shall endeavour to point out the defects I have observed to clog and impede its progress in this island; defects which are in contradiction to the sound principles of political economy. A nation without industry or commerce is neither respected by her friends nor feared by her enemies. The great nerve of power is wanting, which cannot be supplied by theories. The statesman who does not protect and encourage the commerce of his native land, cannot love his country or be a true patriot—he may be compared to the vile traitor who sells his country to a foreign government.

The importance of the commerce of Puerto Rico to Spain is much greater than is commonly supposed; and that importance will be more palpably felt in proportion as the inhabitants of the Peninsula shall apply themselves to industry and manufactures, and have the patriotism to prefer their own, although they should, at the beginning, be inferior to the industry and manufactures of foreign powers.

In 1830, Spain imported to this island only to the amount of 267,816 dollars, 8 reals, and exported to the value of 235,794 dollars, 2 reals, 8 mar., which makes $12\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. of the imports, and $6\frac{7}{8}$ per cent. of the exports; a sum very inconsiderable, when we take into consideration the many useful articles with which the Peninsula might supply this island cheaper and better than any other nation. But this is the effect of causes which I shall endeavour to explain.

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It may be asked, why do the colonies of France and England consume so much of the produce and manufactures of the mother countries, to the exclusion of the produce and manufactures of other powers, while the colonies of Spain consume so small a proportion of the produce of the Peninsula? The answer is very simple. The French and English protect their native industry and manufactures, by putting heavy duties on every class of foreign industry or manufactures that should come in competition with their own. Besides, the French and English have a species of national vanity, which makes them think their own manufactures superior to those of other nations; while, on the contrary, in Spain and her colonies there is a kind of mania for foreign goods, even, in many instances, when these are inferior to the same articles manufactured in the Peninsula. The industrious Catalans have been obliged to adopt the plan of putting labels on their goods, with the words "London," or "Paris," in order to be able to sell them to any advantage. I have observed frequently, both in this island and in Cadiz, persons enter a shop in order to purchase hats. Their first care was invariably to read the label on the inside, without even examining the quality. If they happened to see Barcelona, or any other Spanish manufacturing town inscribed therein, such is their contempt for the manufactures of their own country, that they put them aside, without so much as inquiring the price. A few days after the shopkeeper put on a label, with "London," or "Paris," on the very same hats; and they were sold immediately at a high price, and praised to the skies for their flexibility, lightness, colour, and quality. This ridiculous prejudice, so highly injurious to the interests of their country, must cease before the national manufactures and commerce can arrive at that state to which they

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are entitled, from the superior materials which Spain has within herself, and which are exported to foreign countries,—from whence her colonies receive those very articles, transformed into a thousand shapes, with increased value, leaving all the profit of manufacturing labour, and of carriage, to strangers. It is the duty as well as the interest of every government to afford encouragement and protection to the industry of its own subjects, and to burden as little as possible with duties and restrictions the fruits, produce, and manufactures of its own country. France, England, and the United States of America, act upon this principle. Why should not Spain do the same?

I perceive with regret that the produce of Spain, which should be free, or nearly free, of duties, is heavily charged with duties. This must necessarily depress the Spanish commerce, by giving an advantage to foreign trade which is unjust and impolitic. The king orders that the goods and produce of the Peninsula imported into this island shall pay six per cent. duty ad valorem. But when we examine the duty that they really and *bonâ fide* pay, we find that it amounts on some articles to eight and on others to twelve and fifteen per cent. For example, the following articles are valued ad valorem:—

	AD VALOREM OF THE CUSTOM HOUSES.		PRICE OF THE MARKETS.	
	Dollars.	Reals.	Dollars.	Reals.
Oil of olives, per 25 lbs.	3	4	2	0
Oil of almonds, per lb.	0	4	0	3
Olives, per arroba	1	4	1	0
Spanish brandy, per arroba	3	0	2	4
Carpets for ladies to kneel on at mass	5	0	2	4
Alpute, per quintal	9	0	4	0
Anchovies, per arroba	1	4	1	0

I have here selected only a few articles to demonstrate the question. Thus we find that some articles pay

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one-third more, and others one-half more duties than they would pay by a just valuation; therefore the Spanish produce does not pay six per cent. ad valorem, but eight, ten, and twelve per cent., without including port charges and other incidental expenses.

In agricultural implements, iron boilers, and hardware, there has been imported, in 1830, to the value of 182,261 doll., 3 re. 6 mar.,—the greater part from foreign countries. The province of Biscay produces an abundance of the best iron in the world. Why should not these articles be imported from that country? It were to be wished that some patriotic individuals of capital would form societies for supplying this island and the Havannah with hardware and cutlery. Let these manufactures be encouraged by taking off all duties on them until they become established, and I feel convinced that in a few years the beneficial effects will be felt.

A great quantity of American flour was imported into this island in 1830, while the flour of Spain is decidedly better flavoured and more substantial: but the Americans can afford to sell their flour cheaper, therefore it is preferred by the merchants. Why not take off the duties on Spanish flour, in order to reduce it to an equality in price? and then the Spanish flour will be consumed in preference. In opposition to this argument it is alleged, that if American flour is not purchased, the Americans will not purchase sugar, molasses, or coffee. This is not, in my humble opinion, solid reasoning, or a ground why the produce of Spain should not be protected. For if sugar, molasses, and coffee, are required by the merchants of America, they will send their vessels to purchase them; and if these articles bear a good price in Europe they will bear a corresponding price in Puerto Rico, and will most certainly be exported at

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as good a price as if American flour was imported in abundance.

Why should Puerto Rico receive from foreign countries such a quantity of provisions, and other indispensable articles of domestic consumption, when this island could by the least effort of industry, raise, not only an abundant supply for the support of the population, but also a surplus for exportation? It is really incomprehensible! The land is fertile beyond any thing I have ever beheld; the whole year is an uninterrupted succession of harvests, which liberally repay cultivation; and yet some of the absolute necessaries of life are imported from a country where there is but one annual harvest,—where the ground is closed up by frost and snow half the year,—and where vegetation is scanty and ungrateful!

With the finest pasture land in the world, this island receives large supplies of butter, cheese, and candles from North America, England, and France. This is unpardonable: it is owing to a want of application and industry.

Hog's lard is another article which is largely imported into this island from foreign countries, when thousands and tens of thousands of pigs might be maintained and fattened without any great exertion of industry or any expensive establishment. On the fruit of the palm tree, which grows spontaneously, and which is full of oily and nutritious kernels, might an immense number of swine be fed,—not to speak of plantains, wild roots, and wild fruits, with which the country abounds. These natural resources, properly employed, would furnish an inexhaustible source of riches to this island. Corn-meal, and even the trifling article of crackers, are brought from foreign countries. The corn-meal is sold at double the price at which it could be manufactured in the island. A fanega of maize, which contains twelve almuds, yields eighteen almuds of

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meal; thus reduced to meal it is sold for 5½ dollars, while the fanega of maize is commonly sold at two or three dollars. It would surely cost very little to establish a few mills for grinding this corn, which is produced in such abundance. I am happy to find that two corn mills have been established on the north coast. But these are not sufficient; mills must be erected in every part of the island, on a simple and cheap plan, before their beneficial effects are fully experienced. Why should a fear of innovation and of trying useful and cheap experiments, by which private and public prosperity would be so much advanced, deter the planters from such beneficial and pâtriotic undertakings? It is owing to a palpable want of industry. It is distressing to see the houses of all the inhabitants, even in the interior of the country, adorned with chairs and tables of foreign manufacture, and made of wood which in general is neither beautiful nor durable. The virgin forests of Puerto Rico are full of beautiful and durable wood of various kinds, which is exported, and is highly esteemed in foreign countries for furniture. I lose all patience when I reflect on this subject. Have not the natives of this island the same hands and the same intellect as foreigners? Were they to apply themselves to mechanics, they might rival or excel the foreign market in the beauty and value of their furniture.

Let it not be understood from the tenor of these observations, that I am an enemy to foreign trade; on the contrary, I am convinced of the immense advantages which result from foreign trade, equally, justly, and solidly established on the basis of reciprocity. It is not merely my opinion, but the opinion of profound writers on political economy, that every country should depend

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as much as possible on its own internal resources. Miserable indeed must be that country, and degraded the people, that entirely depend on foreign and distant countries for the necessaries of life. Puerto Rico has within her own bosom inexhaustible sources of agricultural riches. Let her riches be developed by application and industry, and let the manufactures and produce of the mother country be encouraged and protected, in preference to those of foreign nations. When these national feelings of true patriotism are cherished, when they are practically conformed to by the nobleman and the peasant, the commerce of Spain and her colonies will flourish, and they will be closely united by interest and affection. The happiness of this island, I may say its salvation, depends on the industry, perseverance, economy, and indefatigable exertions of the inhabitants. Until not a pound of provisions is imported from a foreign land, can it be pronounced that they have a just idea of their own dearest interests.

To superficial observers these reflections may appear trifling, but those that take a more minute and deeper view of things will consider nothing as trifling or unimportant that can contribute, even remotely, to national prosperity. It requires that the nobility and gentry of Spain should set the example of purchasing and wearing the manufactures of their own country, in order to give an impulse to the industry of the Peninsula. Were the fair sex of Spain, who gave such an example of heroic patriotism and devotion during the invasion of their country by Buonaparte, to make it a point to wear Spanish silks and Spanish laces, even though they should be inferior in quality, or dearer than those brought from England and France,—a spirit of gallantry would induce the male popu-

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lation to follow their example, and the manufactures and commerce of the Peninsula would rise again, like a phœnix from its ashes.

In whatever light we view the island of Puerto Rico, we must allow it to be one of the richest gems in the Spanish crown. In a pecuniary point of view, it does not produce to Spain the immense revenue that Great Britain derives from her West Indian colonies, which amounted in 1829 to 35,000,000 of dollars. Had it not been for the weighty military establishment which government was compelled to keep up in this island, in consequence of the revolution of South America, it would this day have afforded a handsome revenue to the mother country. But even as it stands at present, with a commerce badly regulated, the advantages are incalculably great. This island produces sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other rich productions, for exportation to the home and foreign market. None of the productions of these colonies interfere with, or come in competition with the produce of Spain, because they are not produced in Spain. Nor can Spain obtain them on equal terms from foreign countries. In this commerce between Spanish subjects of different climes, nothing is taken from the circulating wealth of the nation. These colonies give continual employment to her ships and seamen, and thus maintain a traffic which furnishes experienced mariners in time of war. In order to form a correct judgment of the value of the commerce of this island, it must be viewed with attention; every part must be considered separately, and then uniting the whole of the advantages under one comprehensive view, the calculation will exceed belief. It is, I think, an erroneous idea to suppose that the produce of the West Indies can be purchased at a less expense in the colonies of other nations. This is a false hypothesis. And even were

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it perfectly true, it would furnish nothing to prove that colonies are burdensome which can maintain themselves without any aid from the parent state. It may be safely asserted that the British possessions in Western Africa are a burden; for the colonies of Sierra Leone and the Gambia, besides being the graves of Englishmen, consume a large sum of English money without producing any commensurate benefit. This argument also holds good with respect to the miserable Dutch island of Curaçao, and the barren Swedish island of St. Bartholomew, and several other of the small West India islands, which produce nothing, afford no revenue, and depend on the mother countries for protection and subsistence. But Puerto Rico is valuable in every point of view. Suppose Spain had no colonies, what would be the result? She would have to purchase from foreigners, at their own prices, sugar, coffee, tobacco, which at the present day may be considered as necessaries of life: and in return, these foreigners, perhaps, would not receive either the manufactures or produce of Spain, having the same articles at home; or they would place such duties on them as would amount to a prohibition. Nor would the colonists of other powers spend their wealth in Spain; neither would they afford employment to Spanish ships, to Spanish industry, or to Spanish capital. In whatever light we view the trade of Puerto Rico in reference to the mother country, it will always be highly advantageous to the latter. As a learned writer observes, "The national profits arising from colonies ought not to be estimated by the profits which are made by individual cultivation. The income which a nation derives from her sugar islands, comprehends the whole of their produce. The income of the cultivators consists only of the very small proportion of that produce which is left to them after paying duties to government, freight,

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and commission to the merchant, and the interest of the money they may owe." It is a well-established fact, that a business which is ruinous to an individual may be beneficial to the public.

It is only necessary to take a retrospect of the commerce which all European nations carry on with their colonies, to pronounce them highly beneficial to the mother countries, under a good system of administration. We should not calculate the amount of the duties paid to government on the goods imported into Puerto Rico, as the only criterion of utility; for if we did so, we should view the question in the least favourable point of view. We must calculate the thousands of persons employed in the manufacture of their goods and in the culture of the soil:—the manufacturer who puts down his capital, and the number of subordinate hands through which it passes before it arrives at the consumer; the proprietor of the land, and the labourers who are employed in its cultivation; the carters, and other men employed in conducting the produce to the seaports; the coopers who make the casks; the smiths who furnish the iron; the merchants who purchase the produce for exportation; the lighters who convey it on board; the ships freighted to carry it to a foreign clime; the workmen employed in constructing and repairing those ships; the materials which they require, which again employ other tradesmen, all subordinate to, and living by, the activity of commerce: then come the seamen who obtain employment, and the provisions for the voyage, which employ men and industry. The least benefit of all to the nation, which is too often over-rated, are the duties on imports and exports,—the duties on internal consumption, by taxes direct or direct. The same operations, the same variety of persons employed, and the same national advantages which arise from this complication of industry in the

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mother country, occur in the colonies. Both reap the advantages; and both should depend as much as possible on their own internal resources, properly developed, well understood, and honestly directed, and not on the commerce and industry of foreign nations. Spain has nothing to fear from the competition of every nation in the world in the same market, if her manufactures and commerce are properly regulated and protected. Commerce cannot flourish under restrictions and heavy duties.

The great and incalculable advantages to be derived from free trade, can only be illustrated by recurring to living examples, which are the best testimonies in favour of a system which has met with great opposition almost in every country in the world; but when its utility has been practically ascertained, it has been adopted with success. When the British American colonies succeeded, in 1783, in finally obtaining their independence, the people of England and the enemies of England believed that British commerce had received a fatal and deadly blow. From the prejudices and the practices of that day, it was not supposed that their commerce with the emancipated colonies could ever be so great or so advantageous as during the period of British dominion. This ancient and inveterate error has been corrected by the experience of facts; never was the trade of England with her colonies more flourishing than when that trade had become equally free to all the nations of the world. During the period when the trade of America was restricted to England alone—during the most flourishing epoch of that trade, three millions of dollars was the maximum of British manufactures exported to that country. At the present day, when the vessels of every nation on earth enter the ports of the United States, and fill her stores with the produce and manufactures of

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every clime, England exports annually upwards of forty millions of dollars to her ancient colonies, the produce of British industry.

The same or greater advantages will be derived by Spain from her colonies on the American continent, the moment that peace is re-established and a friendly intercourse takes place between them. The loss of the continent of South America will prove as beneficial to Spain as the separation of the North has been to England. The loss of America has not been properly calculated in Spain. At the commencement it overwhelmed every class of the Spanish nation with dreadful apprehensions of the total ruin of their trade, and the consequent impoverishment of the mother country. But quite the contrary has happened. We find that Spain has considerably increased in population. Great national improvements have taken place: roads have been made, canals opened, establishments of public utility erected, the exact income of the nation and its expenses calculated. The revenue not only covers the exigencies, but a part of the national debt has been paid off. Therefore Spain by the revolution of South America has been disburdened of an incubus which paralyzed her manufactures and industry. Puerto Rico and the Havannah answer every purpose of emporiums for Spanish commerce in the new world. From the free trade between Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other countries, under proper restrictions and limitations, Spain will derive an advantage according to the increase of population, of industry, and capital. These must be the result of trade, well understood, and unshackled by unnecessary and oppressive duties, which always defeat their own object. It is a well-established maxim that the only way to quicken the increase of capital, is to leave its possessor at liberty to buy and sell wherever he thinks proper. The value

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and importance of the trade between Spain and her colonies is great, but that trade must be encouraged and protected. Above all, the Spanish manufacturer, the Spanish merchant and ship-owner, the vineyards, wines, silks, and all the innumerable rich productions of the Peninsula, must be fostered and encouraged, to render Spain, what she is by nature intended to be, the granary of Europe, and a great agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial country; while Cuba and Puerto Rico will maintain their rank as the finest, most fertile, and richest islands in the West Indies, and the brightest gems in the Spanish diadem.

THE REVENUE.—The nett revenue of the island in 1832, amounted to 798,404 Spanish dollars; and the whole expense of maintaining the civil and military establishments amounted to 630,300; leaving a balance in the treasury of 168,104 dollars.

Until 1809, the government establishments on the island, both civil and military, were paid by the money which was annually sent from Mexico for that purpose; but the stimulus given to industry by the decree of 1815 also increased the revenue. Nothing can convey a clearer idea of the progressive prosperity of this island than a view of the gradual increase of the revenue for a period of years.

From 1823 to 1832, the custom-house duties and indirect taxes produced as follows:—

	Dollars.	Reals.	Mar.
In 1823 only	362,209	3	20
1824 . . .	484,683	3	7
1825 . . .	497,984	7	18
1826 . . .	547,934	4	12
1827 . . .	614,339	1	9
1828 . . .	691,867	5	4

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	Dollars.	Reals.	Mar.
In 1829 . . .	719,117	0	0
1830 . . .	792,131	6	34
1831 . . .	752,746	0	25
1832 . . .	798,404	0	0
In 1832, the direct taxes produced	207,141	4	14
the custom-house duties	493,930	7	29
and the indirect taxes	97,333	0	0
Total	798,404		

The fixed, or direct taxes are as follows:—

The subsidy, or direct contribution on landed property, was established by virtue of a royal decree, of August, 1815. The tithes, and duty of Alcabala, which existed at that period, were abolished; for the subsidy was considered to hold out greater encouragement to agriculture. Whatever may be the inconvenience arising from direct taxes in other countries, all the bad effects of coercion in their collection is obviated in Puerto Rico. The government does not interfere either in levying or marking the proportion to be paid by individuals; it only superintends and regulates their fair and equal distribution over the different parts of the island. The exact quota which each landed proprietor has to pay, is fixed, and its collection made, by persons appointed by the respective parishes. In their election the inhabitants enjoy perfect liberty, uninfluenced by any authority. The inhabitants of each township present a schedule of the amount of their property. The persons elected by them calculate the produce of the capitals thus valued by their respective proprietors, upon which 3½ per cent. is levied. But it must be understood, that in order to pay less, every body conceals the real amount of his property; therefore,

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without exaggeration, it may be calculated that one-half of the produce of the island is not taxed. The statistical return of 1827 is that which serves as a basis for the regulation of this contribution; and although the agricultural capital and produce of the island has increased considerably since that year, the contribution has not been proportionably augmented. The produce of agricultural capital in 1827 was calculated by the inhabitants themselves at 5,567,406 dollars; three per cent. on this sum makes 194,860 dollars; but out of this there were only 186,194 dollars collected—therefore even the produce valued by the persons interested in concealing the real amount, does not pay three per cent. But if we take into consideration that nobody presents on these occasions the half of his real property, a fact which I have fully ascertained, we will find that they do not pay one and a half per cent. on the gross produce. In whatever point of view we consider this tax, we shall find it more moderate than the taxes imposed on the people of any other European colony.

There were formerly some abuses in the levying of this tax, caused by the inhabitants themselves, which have been remedied by the interference of the government. For instance, the wealthy proprietors who had influence in the country, made interest to be elected to value the property and impose the taxes; and it frequently happened that they overcharged the poor man and the labourer, which was not the intention of government, while they exempted themselves in a great measure from the burden. But this abuse has been completely remedied, and those who maintain their families by their daily labour at present pay no tax; those only who are known to possess property or capital contribute a small proportion.

Notwithstanding that all writers on political economy

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agree in preferring indirect taxes, yet none of the inconveniences of direct taxes are experienced in Puerto Rico. For instance, Say, in comparing direct with indirect contribution, says—" An indirect tax is collected insensibly, in small portions, and according as the contributor has the means of paying it. It has not the inconvenience of being assessed among the provinces, among the parishes, or among private individuals. In does not make public the different affairs of others, and what one does not pay is not saddled on another. It does not produce enmity among the inhabitants of the same town, nor remonstrances, nor judicial compulsion." This doctrine may, generally speaking, be sound and correct, and applicable to the French and English colonies, where slaves, houses, horses, carriages, and all the luxuries and most of the conveniences of life are taxed; where the coercion of legal authority is resorted to in order to enforce payment; where the goods of the poor man are sold for whatever price they may bring, in order to pay exorbitant taxes. I have never in any instance seen measures of coercion resorted to in order to collect contributions in the Spanish colonies. The taxes are so light, so insignificant, that it requires very little exertion to pay them. The inhabitants of all classes are so content with this direct tax that I do not believe that any other could be substituted in its place which would be so cheerfully paid by them, or which could be less oppressive.

The inhabitants of the capital of the island do not pay this tax, but, in lieu of it, they have to pay a duty of five per cent. on the sale of houses, called alcabala. No species of property, at the present moment, produces a higher interest for the capital employed than houses in the city and principal towns. They produce a nett interest of at least ten per cent. There is no tax whatever

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levied on this species of property, further than that already mentioned. Therefore, the person who lays out his capital in land, and essentially contributes by his industry to promote the riches of the country, pays his quota to government, while on the other hand those who place their capitals in houses, without any efforts of industry, without producing any thing, and yet realizing a greater and less precarious profit than the agriculturist, pay nothing,—contribute nothing towards the support of the government by which they are protected. Every member of a state should contribute equally according to the amount of his property to its exigencies; and if any class of men in a community merit more than another the consideration of government, it should undoubtedly be those who are engaged in the expensive, the precarious, but most useful business, of tropical agriculture.

CAPITALS WHICH PAY TRIBUTE.—This is a revenue arising from houses belonging to government, which pay a certain annual tribute levied on them. It amounted in 1830 to 447½ dollars.

THE COCK-PIT.—The cockpit of the capital every two years is rented by government to the highest bidder. It produced in 1830, 233¼ dollars.

BILLIARD ROOMS.—A license is paid for keeping a billiard room. This tax yielded in 1830, 333¼ dollars.

LOTTERIES.—These are public gambling-houses, paying a tax to government, but which should not be tolerated. The unwary are there fleeced of their money. People of all colours, men, women, and children, flock to these seminaries of vice, and there lose their money and time, and contract habits of vice and idleness which are highly injurious to society. In 1830 the lottery was rented at 266½ dollars, which is a trifling consideration to government when compared with the multiplicity of evils which arise

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from this source in a country in which there is already too great a propensity to idleness. Besides, a gambler cannot be a good subject, for he cannot be a good father of a family; he neglects his duty, his trade or calling, and deserts his children for the gaming table. A professed gambler generally becomes a prey to intoxication and vice, and finally a robber, an assassin, or a suicide. Let the professed gamblers be observed in every part of the globe, and in nine cases out of ten this will be found to have been their fate. Every government should strongly discountenance public or private gambling, whatever be its name or denomination.

LAND TAX.—This is a tax of about six shillings sterling per annum, paid for every 180 acres of land, by those who have received it gratis from government. It is only as an acknowledgment of sovereignty. It produced in 1830, 6616$\frac{1}{8}$ dollars.

CASUAL REVENUE.—Alcabala is five per cent. on the sale of houses in the capital only. It produced in 1830, 3970$\frac{1}{4}$ dollars.

REVENUE SALES.—The proceeds of contraband goods seized by government. They produced in 1830, 185$\frac{1}{8}$ dollars.

STAMPED PAPER.—The stamps were subject to much peculation and fraud, until measures were taken to prevent fraudulent practices. In 1830, stamps to the amount of 25,340 dollars were expended. This revenue might be considerably increased by obliging all receipts to be given on stamped paper. In England the stamp duty yields an immense revenue.

SALEABLE OFFICES.—This revenue proceeds from the sale of municipal offices; viz., the situations of those who inspect weights and measures, as well as of notaries public. These situations when vacant are sold to the highest bidder. They produced in 1830, 4270 dollars.

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DUTY ON COCOA IMPORTED.—One dollar is levied on every fanega of cocoa imported, for the purpose of paying pensions to the unfortunate families that emigrated from the Spanish colonies of America. It produced in 1830, 7820 dollars.

PIOUS LEGACIES.—Three dollars are paid to government for every will made, in order to relieve the widows and children of officers and soldiers who have been killed in action, or who may have perished during the revolutions of South America.

SALE OF SLAVES.—These slaves consist of negroes who have been taken up by the police, and are not, after a certain period, claimed by their owners; they are sold to pay the expense of their maintenance, prison dues, &c.: the residue is handed to the Treasury. The sales amounted in 1830, to 545½ dollars.

DUTY ON SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS.—This is a trifling duty imposed on spirituous liquors sold in the capital, to keep up the repair of the bridges which form the communication between the capital and the country. It produced in 1830, 390 dollars.

ANNATS OF THE HALF YEAR.—This is the half of the yearly salary, which every person receiving a civil or ecclesiastical employment has to pay the first year to government.

PROFITS OF 25 PER CENT.—This is a profit which the government makes by the exchange of gold doubloons and silver dollars for the current money of the country, which in 1830, gave 3779⅞ dollars.

BULLS.—This is a revenue arising from the sums paid by the faithful, who purchase the bulls of the Holy Crusade, which allow them to eat meat during Lent and fast days. It produced in 1830, 4270 dollars.

CUSTOM-HOUSE DUTIES.—The revenue arising from the custom-house duties, which in 1823 was only 199,987

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dollars, was in 1830, 493,930⅞ dollars. This increase may be attributed to the augmentation of agriculture, and consequently to that of commerce. I have already adverted to the energetic measures taken by the captain-general in 1825, to repress the shameless system of peculation that existed in the offices of finance, which had the immediate effect of nearly doubling the revenue the next year. We find that the custom-house revenue has more than doubled since the year 1823. It may be inferred from this that the contraband trade has decreased, and that the inhabitants have become more industrious, which enables them to purchase more of the comforts of life. There cannot exist a doubt, that the revenue of the island will still increase, when the number of authorized ports for clearing vessels are reduced to the number absolutely necessary for the ends of commerce, and a depôt for foreign goods and manufactures is established on a solid and a liberal footing. But if, under the present high rate of the tariff, and the heavy duty paid both by Spanish and foreign goods, the revenue has progressively increased, what further increase might we not reasonably expect were the duties lowered, which would make the consumption greater, by placing within the reach of the poorest individuals articles of comfort which they at present cannot enjoy. By a measure prudently and gradually adopted, the revenue would be considerably augmented, and the happiness and comforts of the people would be promoted. It is a well-established fact, that by raising the duties on importation no advantage arises to the government. When Great Britain was engaged in the height of the last war, the ministry devised every possible means for augmenting the revenue, in order to support the immense expenses of her military and naval establishments, and the subsidies to foreign

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powers; among other expedients they resorted to that of raising the duties on several articles of importation, imagining that there would have been a proportional rise in the revenue; but quite the contrary happened—the very first year the revenue decreased nearly one-half. The ministers perceived their mistake, and lowered the duties more than they had been at any former period. The consumption was great in proportion to the cheapness of articles, and the revenue considerably augmented. Say, in his work, cites a case in point. "In 1804, the British government augmented twenty per cent. the duty on sugar, considering, perhaps, that this duty, which produced to the exchequer in a year, £2,778,000 sterling, augmented one-fifth, ought to have produced £3,330,000 sterling; but it did not produce more than £2,537,000 sterling, which was less than before the increase of duties."

It is a fact, proved by the experience of all commercial countries, that the increase of duties does not tend to increase the revenue, while it holds out a powerful inducement to contraband trade. I shall produce a very recent case, to prove how much high duties tend to diminish the revenue of a nation, and to increase illegal traffic. The government of the United States placed a very high duty on teas imported into the Union; the consequence was, that the revenue on that article decreased; for the British merchants of Canada made immense importations of tea every year, which they smuggled over land, in small parcels, into the territories of the United States. The government of the latter country knew that smuggling to a great extent was going on; and having done every thing in their power to prevent it in vain, they at last reduced the duty on tea to a mere trifle. This had a good effect; the British merchants found they could make

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nothing by smuggling tea into the States, and the revenue increased to an extent before unknown. These are practical examples which the Spanish government have before them, and which teach the road they should pursue, in order to increase the revenue, suppress illicit traffic, and promote the comforts and happiness of their subjects.

REVENUE OF THE NAVY.—This department is entirely independent of the civil and military authorities. The funds are under the control of a commissary of the navy, who, by the advice and under the direction of the commandant of marine, pays those who belong to that department. This revenue arises from the duty on the anchorage of vessels; it produced in 1830, 45,658 dollars. In 1831, there were in the treasury of the navy, 63,995 dolls., 1 rl., 19½ mar.

The expenses of the department were as follows:—

	Dollars.	Reals.	Mar.
To the arsenal for work and pay . .	17,963	0	1½
Expenses of constructing gun boats .	1146	1	32½
Expenses of the different persons employed, &c.	32,993	6	24
Sum existing in the chest, in January, 1832	11,892	0	29½

MUNICIPAL DUTIES.—The expense of lighting the capital is defrayed by a trifling tax on bread. In 1830, it produced 10,014½ dollars. The prisoners confined in the royal gaol are maintained by a duty on the slaughter of cattle. It amounted in 1830, to 6795 dollars.

The sums of money expended on public works in Puerto Rico, from 1824 to 1830, amounted to 852,592¾ dollars; a greater sum than has been disbursed for the

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same purposes (excepting when the fortifications were built) for the three hundred years preceding.

Recapitulation of the Direct Taxes, without deducting Expenses of Collection.

	Dollars.	Reals.	Mar.
Subsidy . . .	200,487	2	30
For public expenses .	48,975	7	31
Duty on land . .	9,818	0	28
First fruits . . .	7,245	0	0
	266,526$\frac{1}{8}$		

Which, according to the valuation of property and population in 1827, makes 1 per cent. on the value of property, and $7\frac{7}{8}$ on the produce: and, assuming the population to have been 323,828 souls, it would make about 3*s.* sterling direct contribution to each individual.

In 1830, there was a royal lottery established by the intendant of Puerto Rico, with the approbation of government: the capital was 20,000 dollars, divided into an equal number of tickets. The fourth part, or 25 per cent. remains in favour of government. The object of its institution was for the payment of credits on government. In 1814 and 1817, attempts were made by different intendants to establish a lottery of this description, but the island was then too poor to support it. One drawing takes place every month. I cannot for a moment imagine that this has been a prudent measure: far from it; I conceive it to be one of the worst means of raising a revenue. "In lotteries, and games of chance," observes Say, "besides their money, the gamblers also lose their time, which might have been usefully employed. This is a part of the imposts from which the exchequer receives no benefit. Games of chance have,

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besides, this baneful influence,—they habituate men to expect from chance a fortune which ought to be obtained through talent and industry, and accustom them to seek gain in the losses of others, rather than in the true origin of riches. The recompense of active labour appears to them to be miserable, compared to what they hope to get in the lottery. Lotteries are, on the other hand, a tax which, although voluntary, falls almost entirely on the most necessitous class, whom necessity alone causes to overlook the disadvantages of an unequal game. It is almost always the bread of misery which is staked in them, if not the fruit of crime." These observations, made by a judicious writer, I have observed to be practically true in the colonies. The 25 per cent. which the lottery yields on a capital of 20,000 dollars, only covers a very small part of the money due by government; but this temporary and partial benefit cannot compensate for the evil it produces by its tendency to demoralize and render idle the lower classes of society. How many slaves pilfer from their masters, in order to purchase a ticket in the lottery, in the hope of obtaining their freedom! How many children, from this temptation to play, imbibe the first principles of vice, and become afterwards irreclaimable gamblers! How many industrious artizans have become idlers and vagabonds, because their neighbours had chanced to draw a small prize! They invest the money which they had laid by to purchase instruments for their trade, or perhaps food for their children, in lottery tickets; they neglect their business or calling, hoping to make a fortune by a prize; month after month this delusion goes on, until the hitherto honest tradesman becomes a vagabond and a bankrupt! How many poor persons have I seen in the colonies, sell even articles of necessary dress for one-tenth of their value, in order to be

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able to purchase a ticket in the lottery! Whoever for a moment reflects on the idleness that is superinduced by this authorized system of gambling, in a warm climate, where there seems to be a natural propensity to idleness and games of chance, will agree with me in thinking that the time lost by the whole population in indulging in these games, if employed in industry, would far exceed in value the trifle which accrues to the revenue by their establishment, and that the produce of the same time would be more than an equivalent to a gain which has such a pernicious effect on public morals. I therefore pronounce, on the authority of the most enlightened writers and philosophers, and the example of the British government, which has abolished national lotteries, that these, as well as all other games of chance, whether they be public or private lotteries, or gaming tables, are highly injurious to the colonies. I am persuaded that the revenue will ultimately lose by the number of persons who are converted into idlers by them; they may be considered as a reduction from the number of hogsheads of sugar, quintals of coffee, cotton, and tobacco, brought to market, independently of the number of families who live in misery that they may have the means of gambling.

In order to be able to form a just estimate of the taxes levied on the inhabitants of the Spanish colonies, we must compare them with those exacted in the neighbouring colonies by their respective goverments. In the Danish island of St. Cruz, the following direct taxes are levied, without any exemption.

The owner of every acre of land, cultivated or uncultivated, pays to government a land tax of one dollar.

Every estate, large and small, is taxed seventy-five dollars annually for the payment of cavalry patroles.

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For every male slave one dollar is paid, and for every female 3*s*. annually.

Every house pays a heavy tax according to a valuation made.

The sugar exported pays a duty of 10 per cent. ad valorem.

Dogs pay four dollars each per annum, and they must wear collars with a government stamp thereon, which is also paid for. If the dog is found in the street by the police, he is put in jail, the owner is fined for his neglect, and besides is obliged to pay the prison fees.

There are also taxes on shops, sales, &c., besides the indirect tax levied by duties at the custom-house on the importation of goods, municipal duties, &c.

Foreigners pay eight dollars for their passports.

In the English and French islands, the taxes are also very heavy. When we reflect that in the English, the French, and the Danish islands, not a single slave is exempted from taxes, and that the houses and property of all descriptions are scrupulously examined, and valued to the last shilling, so that not one acre of land, not one dog, horse, or carriage, escapes the rigid investigation of the agents of government, we shall find that they pay to the full extent of their property—while in Puerto Rico, the indulgence of the government is so great, that the inhabitants themselves value and assess their own property, and make the distribution of it; and, as is very natural to suppose, they conceal at least one-half; therefore we may fairly conclude that they do not pay taxes on one-half their property and produce. Consequently, I do not hazard an erroneous opinion by saying that the Spanish colonies are less burdened by taxes and contributions than the colonies of any other European power.

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CHAPTER VI.

Advantages of the Soil and Climate for Agriculture—Want of Capital—Comparative View of the Value of Agricultural Produce in 1770, 1803, 1828, 1830, *and* 1832—*Rearing of horned Cattle—Calculation of the Number of Cattle slaughtered and exported—Sheep, Goats, Swine, Horses, Poultry—Estimate of the Number and Value of the whole Live Stock in the Island—Calculation of the Profits of a Cattle Farm of* 200 *Acres—Cultivation of Sugar—Its precarious Profits by Slave Labour—Cultivation of Coffee—Indigo—Tobacco—Cotton—Provisions—Rice—Maize—Calculation of the Profits of a Plantain Grove—Hints on rearing Bees,—on Experimental Farms,—on Planting Fruit Trees, Preservation of Timber Forests, and the Encouragement of Horticulture.*

THE principal wealth of Puerto Rico consists in agriculture. No manufactories exist; and, fortunately for the inhabitants, no mines of gold or silver have been explored, to divert their attention from the sober path of industry. The solid, the true, and permanent mine is only to be found in the cultivation of the soil. The rich and prolific vegetation which pervades every part of the island, can only be conceived by those who have traversed its fields, explored its woods, and ascended its mountains. We

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must compare it with the worn-out and sterile lands of the small islands to windward, in order to appreciate justly its value. The agriculturalist is not limited by the nature of the soil to the exclusive cultivation of any particular produce. Every species of fruits and vegetables congenial to tropical climates, may be planted with the certainty of reaping an abundant harvest. The best and most luxuriant pasture that fancy could imagine for rearing cattle, the rich, deep vegetable mould necessary for the sugar cane, the humid soil in which the cocoa tree vegetates, and the cool mountain glades so congenial to the coffee plant, may be found within a small circle. Cotton, tobacco, and indigo, the latter of which grows spontaneously in the fields, only require the fostering hand of industry, and the support of capital, to render them objects of importance.

Since the improvement and advance of agriculture, which the royal decree of 1815 promoted in a special degree, the number of the inhabitants has multiplied in an extraordinary manner, and commerce, foreign and inland, has been carried on with vigour and success.* Nevertheless, with a soil scarcely equalled, and certainly not surpassed in any island in the West Indies, with a genial climate,

*The revolution of St. Domingo sent to Puerto Rico, as I have already remarked, many useful individuals, who brought with them industry, capital, and a knowledge of the culture of the sugar-cane. The revolution of Venezuela also brought a second supply of useful and industrious individuals, who have essentially contributed to the increase of agriculture. But the wise decree of 1815, which not only invited foreigners to the island with their capitals, but exempted the agriculturists from payment of tithes and alcabala, and substituted in its place a duty of 2½ per cent. on the produce, gave an immense impulse to this settlement, and propelled it forward, notwithstanding the many causes which impeded its free advance. The immigration of foreigners with capital and agricultural knowledge, is not the least important of the causes of prosperity;—as a well-informed author observes, "A truly useful acquisition to a nation is that of a foreigner who establishes himself in it, carrying with him his property, because thereby the nation acquires two fountains of riches, viz.—industry and

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and a competent number of free labourers and slaves, this island has not yet reached that state of cultivation of which it is susceptible. The want of sufficient capital is one of the principal causes that the produce does not correspond to the population, to the extent of territory, and to the extraordinary fertility of its soil. Much has been done within these last few years, but much still remains to be accomplished.

Thirty years ago, there were only two sugar estates on the island, and even these were imperfectly cultivated. Rearing cattle, and raising a scanty supply of provisions and a few coffee plants, were the utmost extent of Puerto Rico husbandry. In the year 1770, the whole produce of the island consisted in

2237 quintals, 25 lbs. sugar
28,070 lbs. tobacco
45,049 lbs. coffee.

From this statement may be inferred the depressed state of agriculture at that period.

In the year 1803, the whole value of colonial productions exported, amounted only to 57,500 dollars, and in 1816, to 65,274 dollars.

The whole plane superficies of the island contains, according to the government measurement, about 2,584,000 English acres; of which, 1,437,285 acres are divided among 19,140 proprietors, giving to each pro-

capital, which are equivalent to the augmentation of territory in that country; a valuable acquisition, when the stranger is possessed of virtue and affection towards his adopted country."—*Say.*

Another principal cause of the increase of agriculture in this island, is the attention recently paid to the constructing of bridges and making roads; which led to the cultivation of lands that would have remained waste, and which brought into the commercial world fruits which would never otherwise have been raised: hence the well-founded opinion of those who have considered roads and bridges as part of the productive capital of a country. I should think it might be added, that without them, industry and capital would be comparatively of little avail.

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prietor, on an average, 75⅛ acres. Of these, 423 are proprietors of estates regularly established with slaves, 275 sugar estates, and 148 coffee plantations. There were also 1277 minor establishments of cane, with wooden mills, in which they make molasses and sugar for their own consumption. The remaining 17,440 proprietors breed cattle, and raise provisions and small quantities of coffee. There were in 1828, 85,076 acres of land under cultivation, in the following manner:—

	ACRES.
Under Sugar cane	11,103
Plantains	21,761
Rice	11,855
Indian corn	12,194
Tobacco	2199
Manioc	763
Sweet potatoes	8224
Yams	4696
Pulse	948
Horticulture	15
Coffee (with 9,135,572 coffee plants)	9135
Cotton (with 2,080,810 cotton trees)	2080
Fruit trees	103
Under cultivation	85,076
In pasture	634,506
In wood	728,703
Making a total of	1,448,285

acres which pay land tax to government.

The remaining 1,146,715 acres consist in lofty peaks of mountains, the space occupied by the towns, roads, rivers, irreclaimable land on the sea-shore, and crown lands in the interior of the island, the extent of which has never

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been exactly ascertained. In consequence of the number of mountains and hills, and the undulating nature of the surface of the country generally, there is no doubt that a great deal more land exists than that which this calculation offers to our view. It would be a most desirable undertaking to have an exact survey made of all the lands in the island, in order to ascertain the number of acres it contains, and the quantity of land under cultivation, in order to check that spirit of monopoly which stimulates rapacious men to grasp at more land than they have a just right to, or can possibly cultivate; a monopoly which operates as a direct check on the advance and prosperity of agriculture. I am aware such an undertaking must be the work of time; but the day approaches, when the number of the population, and the impulse given to industry, will render this step of imperative necessity.

Notwithstanding that the contributions on land and produce have been always very mild in this island, and have borne very light on the proprietor, yet it is impossible to obtain an exact calculation either of the number of acres under cultivation, the produce, the number of cattle, or even that of slaves; for each township forms a committee of planters in order to appreciate the value of property and produce, and according to their valuation the subsidy is levied. These people erroneously imagine that by concealing the value of property they evade the taxes, or prevent heavier taxes being imposed, whereas in fact, they only lead to erroneous calculations, the weight of which falls invariably on the poorer classes, while the government can never exactly ascertain or count on the real resources of the country. However, guided exactly by these official statements of government, the reader may be certain that he only views the minimum calculation of every class of agricultural industry and produce; I am

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certain that the island contains nearly one-half more in agricultural riches and in produce than what really appears by the official returns made to government,—of which I avail myself, as the most genuine and least fallible source of information. With this explanation, I present the following statement of the agricultural riches of the island in 1830, according to the government returns:—

Agricultural Wealth of Puerto Rico in 1830.

1277 wooden mills for grinding sugar cane, conducted by free labour generally.
300 iron ditto on estates cultivated by slaves.
148 coffee estates, with machinery.
340 stills for distilling rum.
14,803 acres under sugar-cane.
30,760 —— plantains.
14,850 —— rice.
16,194 —— Indian corn.
2599 —— tobacco.
1150 —— manioc.
1224 acres sweet potatoes.
6696 —— yams.
1100 —— pulse.
31 —— in horticulture.
16,992,857 coffee plants.
3,079,310 cotton trees.
500 pepper do.
60,050 cocoa do.
85,760 orange do.
55,760 alligator-pear do.
45 lime kilns.
80 ovens for making bricks.

The Produce of the above was as follows:—

414,660 quintals of muscovado sugar, of 112 lbs. each.
1,507,769 gallons of molasses.
12,165 puncheons of rum, of 100 gallons each.
617,825 loads of plantains.
63,750 fanegas of Indian corn (two bushels each).
34,640 quintals of cured tobacco.
30,419 mule loads of cassada bread.
29,570 quintals of sweet potatoes.
7850 ditto yams.
4570 ditto pulse.
250,000 ditto coffee.
750 ditto pepper.
75,650 hundreds of cocoa nuts.
85,780 ditto oranges.
450,000 bushels of lime.
5377 thousands of bricks.

Live Stock.

42,500 cows.
20,910 bullocks.
6720 bulls.
25,760 horses.
27,210 mares.
315 asses.
1112 mules.
7560 sheep.
5969 goats.
25,087 swine.
338,454 hens.
8671 turkeys.

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Produce of the above.

33,270 calves.	250 mules of a year old.
5747 lambs.	45,980 young pigs.
5234 kids.	79,577 hundreds of eggs.
10,570 foals.	567,780 chickens.

The whole agricultural riches of the island, houses, lands, and slaves not included, were valued in 1832 at 37,993,599 dollars, and the produce at 6,883,371 dollars; of which were exported through the custom-houses to the value of 3,411,845½ dollars. The contributions levied on this property amounted only to 266,526 dollars, which is less than 3¼ per cent. on the value of property, and less than 5⅞ per cent. on the value of produce. I have no doubt that the value of property and produce is much greater than what I have stated; for as the people of the country themselves make the valuation, they always endeavour to make it appear as small as possible in consequence of the direct tax levied on property.

The riches of this island may be considered as divided into two branches, agricultural and pastoral; and under their respective heads, (although generally united in this island, as they are in England and Holland,) I shall endeavour to give a description of them, which, although it may leave ample room for further investigation, will give a pretty correct idea of the state of things.

Cattle.—The pasture lands on the north and east coasts are superior to any thing of the kind that I have seen in the West Indies for the breeding and fattening of cattle. In some of the breeding districts where there are no arable lands, the cattle are permitted to roam in the *hato*, in the mode customary on the Spanish main, but on a smaller scale. There are only about three or four individuals who possess a thousand head of cattle:

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others have 500, 200, 100, 50, 10,—until we come to the poor proprietor who possesses only a cow or two to supply milk and cheese to his family. Some on a more reduced scale have the cattle penned up in enclosed meadows, as in England; and in other places, where the pasturage is every where mixed with cultivated land, the cows and bullocks are fastened, by a rope of about fifteen yards long, to a stake driven into the ground: they are removed three or four times a-day, and at noon they recline under the shade of the beautiful palmetto and other trees, which at once are objects of ornament and utility. Rivers and brooks run in every direction, which afford them drink, and refresh and cool the grass, renovating it by the moisture thus imparted to the adjacent soil. By this mode of management the cattle of the island are perfectly tame and inoffensive. An instance never occurs of a bull attacking a person passing through the fields. They are not like the fierce bulls of Spain, which often seek the passenger on the high road.

I have seldom seen lean cattle in the island, except the bullocks upon the cane estates on the south coast, where excessive drought parches up the grass, and where they are fed on the cane tops in time of harvest. Guinea-grass is sown, but it has not been generally introduced, on account of the excellent and nutritive native grasses of different species to be found in every valley. The quantity of pasture, and the extent of land yet covered with forests as old as the deluge, which will be cut down as cultivation increases, render a recurrence to artificial meadows as yet unnecessary; nor are any of those measures for fattening resorted to which the graziers of Europe adopt. The cattle are turned into the fattening pasture at a year old, and in three or four months are fit for sale. The greater part of the cattle are raised in the valleys

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distant from the coast, from whence the carriage of sugar and coffee would be too expensive for the cultivator.

From time immemorial a great traffic has been carried on with the cattle of this island, which are embarked for the French, English, and Danish islands. In consequence of their being so very tame they are easily managed on board ship, and do not become lean so soon, nor die so frequently, as the wild cattle of the American continent when embarked. The contractors for supplying the troops of the French and English islands with fresh beef will always find a great advantage and saving by taking their supplies from this island. The best cattle are reserved for exportation. Full-grown bullocks are generally sold for 33⅓ dollars per head, or, according to the usual mode, 100 dollars for each three head. I have seen cattle full-grown at a year old; and it is common for heifers of a year old to have calves; such is the precocity of nature in this island. It is prohibited, under severe penalties, to kill or export cows, except such as are either old or incapable of bearing; but, notwithstanding this prohibition, cows are killed and exported clandestinely, which will happen as long as it is the interest of the persons rearing them to do so. In 1828 there were exported from the island upwards of 11,500 head of cattle. In 1829 there were exported from the custom-house only 6193 head. In 1830 there were exported 14,110 head. But this latter number falls considerably short of the number annually carried from the island, as a considerable contraband trade has long been carried on, which it is difficult to prevent; for the vessels come to the shore at night, having a previous understanding with the cattle-merchants, and before the dawn of morning they are loaded and out to sea. Therefore it is at present impossible to ascertain exactly the number of cattle exported.

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I have in vain endeavoured to find out the exact number of cattle annually consumed in the island, though a regular account is ordered to be kept by the magistrates in every town and village. On their estates the people freely kill cattle. The number of hides exported do not furnish an exact account of the number slaughtered in the island. But taking into consideration the quantity of hides manufactured into leather by two tan-yards, which tan upwards of 2000 annually,—and bearing in mind that a great number of raw hides are converted by the inhabitants to different uses, such as making gear and harness for mules, working horses, &c.,—I form (as an approximate estimate, deduced from all the information I have been able to obtain) the calculation, that there are about 23,000 head of horned cattle, great and small, slaughtered and consumed on the island annually. I make this calculation to shew that the number of cattle in this island is more than double the number which the statistical account of government presents. As a proof of this I may mention the fact, that when the magistrates of different valleys of the island, after the dreadful hurricane of 1825, gave in a return to government of the number of cattle destroyed by its violence, the magistrates of Yubacao and Bayamo gave in, as drowned and killed, more than double the number that was returned officially to government as existing that year in those places. In 1830, according to government returns, there were 78,181 head of horned cattle in the island—thus:

Cows	33,181
Bullocks	16,910
Heifers	6720
Calves	21,370
	78,181

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Brought forward	78,181
To which add, cattle exported through the custom-house	6704
Ditto, by illicit traffic, (say)	3000
Raw hides exported through the custom-houses, to the amount of 4487½ quintals, which allows 25 lbs. weight for each raw hide, without making any allowance for contraband	17,950
Hides tanned at the two tan-yards in 1830	4000
Ditto, consumed in the various uses of agriculture	8000
	117,835

This makes a total of 117,835 horned cattle, on the lowest possible estimate. Therefore, calculating the number of cattle consumed in the island to be far greater than the number of hides tanned and exported, the number embarked without paying duties, and the number which their owners do not put down in their returns made to government, we may safely calculate that there are upwards of 200,000 head of horned cattle on the island, which would be three head, small and full-grown, to every three acres of pasture land; and, calculating each of these worth 20 dollars, we reach the sum of two millions of dollars, on a reasonable average, in cattle alone.

The large proprietors, who have from 100 to 500 head, where they have not sufficient pasture land of their own, divide them among the poorer land-owners. They give cows and calves, already weaned, to be taken care of: the produce of the cow, and the calves, when fit for sale, are sold, and the profits divided between the contracting parties. Thus, the poor man has a means of supporting his family, and the monied farmer augments his capital without trouble or risk. Although, from the limited

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extent of pasture land, we find no immense cattle estates like those on the continent, we may perceive the great advantages which result from the distribution of rural industry, and the happy admixture of agriculture and cattle-breeding; a system which is highly recommended by the experience of those who have treated this interesting topic.

CHEESE AND BUTTER.—The quantity of cheese which is made, although considerable, is not sufficient for the home consumption, and, therefore, a good deal is imported from foreign countries. Both butter and cheese, from the excellence of the pasture, are rich and well flavoured; but there is nothing like a well-regulated dairy in the island, an improvement which might produce great advantages.

PROFITS ON CAPITAL INVESTED IN CATTLE.—It is commonly supposed, that capital employed in cattle in this island will produce greater profit than in agriculture, and some say that the capital employed may be annually doubled; but I should think this is a too flattering picture, although cattle-breeding is certainly very lucrative, as will appear by a statement I shall exhibit of a capital invested in cattle. Like every other speculation, it is subject to variations, disappointments, and misfortunes. In this island, a great capital can never be employed by a single individual in this traffic. It will always be divided and subdivided among a great number of small proprietors, which is more advantageous to the general prosperity of the country; the state of things here being entirely different from that on the continent, where a single *hato* sometimes occupies 100 leagues of land,—and a single owner has been known to brand yearly with his name ten thousand calves. The breed of cows in this island, though good, might still be much improved by introducing the large breeds of England or Flanders,

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which give such an extraordinary quantity of milk, and are so easily fattened.

SHEEP.—The number of sheep in the island is very limited. According to the government returns, the number is only 7334; but there are certainly at least double that number,—the official estimate being founded on the same fallacious data as that regarding the horned cattle. The wool degenerates into a species of hair; but the flesh is delicious, and may be compared to the best mutton of Curaçao, which has always been highly prized in the West Indies. It is a pity that the inhabitants have not turned their attention more seriously to this lucrative branch of industry. The south coast, and the mountains in particular, are well adapted to the breeding of sheep; the grass is every where mixed with aromatic plants, and the soil is dry. Sheep, as well as horned cattle, might be made a staple commodity for supplying the foreign islands with an article in constant request. This is the more desirable, as by a proper attention to the breeding and care of sheep, in the course of a few years, the inhabitants might render themselves independent of foreign countries for candles and soap. In 1830, this island received from foreign markets, the value of 32,920 dollars, 5 reals, 2 mar., in tallow candles; and 7574 dollars, 6 reals, 31 mar., in spermaceti candles; making a total of 40,495 dollars, 3 reals, 33 mar. This large item of expense might be easily saved to the colony, by promoting, encouraging, and supporting the breeding of cattle of all descriptions, which is not only compatible with, but is a powerful auxiliary to agriculture.

GOATS.—The number of goats, estimated by the same data, and subject to the same rule of proportion between the official returns and actual facts, as the sheep, is calculated to amount to 8730 head. The utility, however,

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of this animal is not so generally acknowledged; it is only desirable in sterile tracts of land, unfit for cultivation, or for the maintenance of other animals—tracts not to be found in any part of this island.

SWINE.—The breeding of pigs, which might be most usefully intermixed with every other description of cattle, and with every species of agriculture, is not considered of that importance which it merits in a country of such extreme fertility, where the abundance of fruit trees, plantains, grass, the whey of the milk after making cheese, the refuse of the canes, &c. would supply inexhaustible means of maintenance. It is almost incredible that a number so very inconsiderable as 36,067 swine, large and small, should have been given in to government as the real number possessed by nearly 400,000 souls, of whom there are upwards of 19,140 proprietors,—which does not leave two pigs for every proprietor of land. This is an error too palpable to be overlooked. It shews the unaccountable mania which exists for concealing property. It is very clear and convincing that there must be at least four times the number of pigs specified in the returns made to government; for allowing every proprietor of land to have only one sow, and every sow to have only one litter of pigs, consisting of six, it would make a total of 133,980. But I am persuaded, that even this falls short of the actual number of swine in the island, for there is scarcely a cabin without one or two, and some people have a large herd of them. According to the best information I could obtain, there are at least 40,000 swine, large and small, annually consumed in the island. In the capital, on an average, there are twelve slaughtered daily, or 4380 in the year.

HORSES.—The number of horses specified in the official returns, amounts to 40,000; but from the effect of the

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causes already explained, it is certain that this estimate is far below the truth. There is scarcely to be found a poor man who does not possess one or two horses, and those who have land and any thing to subsist on usually keep three or four. Without any risk of exaggeration, therefore, we may rate them at double the official number, or 80,000, at least. The horses of this island are not remarkable for size, beauty, or swiftness. They are generally small, with slender limbs, and thin necks; nevertheless they are very hardy, undergo an amazing deal of fatigue, and ascend the steepest mountains without making a false step. They are particularly prized for their ambling pace, and bear a price of from 50 to 400 dollars, according to their celerity; they cannot, however, be compared either in beauty or swiftness even to the middling horses of Europe—notwithstanding that the native of Puerto Rico would prefer a poor-looking pacing horse to the swiftest English racer. All races of animals improve by being crossed. Were some good Spanish or English mares brought to this island, the breed of horses would undoubtedly improve. As they remain at present, without much attention being paid to their breeding, they must degenerate. This is a fact which has been observed even in the human species in some countries where the same original stock has remained without any admixture of foreign blood for a long succession of generations. Horses form a branch of importation to the foreign colonies. In 1830, 357 horses were exported.

MULES AND ASSES.—The number of mules, compared with the horses, is very small. According to official returns it amounts to about 1000. They cannot be compared to the noble mule of La Mancha in Spain, either in size or appearance. They are diminutive, and are

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only fit to carry burdens. In 1830, there were 179 mules legally exported to the foreign colonies. Asses are still more scarce; the whole island only contains 262—probably from the well-established fact, that a damp climate is unfavourable to their propagation.

POULTRY.—Neither on the estates, nor in the houses of the poor peasantry, is any attention paid to rural economy. Very little attention is paid to the rearing of fowls. The returns to government only give 225,978 common fowls, and 5671 turkeys,—which cannot, however, be one-fourth of the real number, even supposing the greatest possible neglect in this productive branch of domestic industry. Were the same attention and care bestowed on fowls and other animals, as is prodigally given to the breed of game-cocks, both the people, the island, and the government, would be happier, richer, and more powerful; and as long as the erroneous system of secreting property from the knowledge of government is absurdly persisted in, every statement of animals must fall far short of the real number, and every calculation be erroneous.

Without hesitation, from what I know and have observed, and considering it to be the minimum of their value, I offer the following statement of the number and value of the animals of this island :—

				Dollars.
200,000	head of horned cattle, at an average of 20 dollars per head			4,000,000
80,000	horses at	40	dollars each	3,200,000
14,668	sheep	3	ditto	44,004
17,460	goats	2	ditto	34,920
139,980	swine	4	ditto	535,920
1000	mules	40	ditto	40,000
262	asses	15	ditto	3930
			Total value of cattle	7,858,774

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The following is given as an approximate calculation of the produce which may be derived from a cattle estate of 100 acres of land.

It is a well-established fact that the capital of a nation augments as private property is divided. In this island property is divided to an extent not to be found in any other island of the West Indies; therefore, with the exception of three or four persons, few individuals have pasturage for two hundred head of cattle. Every small proprietor has his cow, from which he maintains his family, and sells the calves to others, who fatten them; thereby dividing and subdividing the industry, which employs usefully a greater number of persons than if it was confined to a single person. That an idea may be formed of the produce of cattle in this island, I will suppose a tract of 100 acres under pasturage. I place the produce of the cattle on the minimum rate; for I wish to take a general average of all the cattle in the island. A good cow is worth on an average from twenty to thirty dollars, and an acre of good land is calculated in its natural state to maintain one cow. Therefore, calculating the medium price of good pasture land at thirty dollars per acre, 100 acres will cost 3000 dollars; 100 cows, at 25 dollars each, 2500; and the capital required is 5500 dollars. Supposing each cow to give milk only six months in the year, on a very moderate calculation she will yield forty-eight pounds of cheese, which at one real per lb. or 6*d.* sterling, will make six dollars. Suppose each cow to bring forth one calf worth only six dollars; this will make the produce of each cow twelve dollars yearly; or the produce of one hundred cows 1200 dollars. Deducting from this sum the wages of four men, who are necessary to move and milk them, at four reals (or two shillings sterling) per diem each, we have 730 dollars; which leaves a nett produce of 470 dollars, or 8½

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per cent. per annum, on the capital. The exceptions to this rule are cows in the vicinity of the capital, and Mayagues, Ponce, &c., where the milk is sold, which will produce more; but on taking the general average of the island, one cow with another, this calculation may be considered as approaching nearly to the truth. This profit might be considerably increased by attending to the economy of a dairy, by making cheese and butter, by which the island might be supplied, and rearing pigs on the whey, &c.

A capital employed in fattening cattle will produce much greater profit than in keeping cows. For example, 100 acres of land in pasture, 3000 dollars,—100 yearling calves, at twelve dollars each, 1200,—makes a capital of 4200 dollars. At the end of another year these calves are full-grown, and at the lowest price are worth twenty-four dollars each, making, for 100 calves, 2400 dollars; after deducting for expenses of care, &c. 700 dollars, leaves in nett profit 1700 dollars, or about 40 per cent. per annum on the capital employed,—which is an enormous profit, even after making all due allowances for the contingencies of sickness, mortality, &c.

It is commonly asserted in this island that cattle thus purchased yield cent. per cent. per annum. But I imagine that when persons have made this calculation, they did not recollect to estimate the value of the capital invested in the land, which is necessary in order to arrive at the truth. People are too often carried away by appearances which are not founded on a solid basis. The advantage of cattle is that the capital employed can be quickly and easily realized, whereas the large capital which is engrossed by a sugar establishment is slow and precarious in its produce, and gives at the present day little or no profit, while it would be very difficult, not to say impossible, to realize it immediately. Were it

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not for the mixing of grazing with agriculture, the cane estates on the north coast could not possibly maintain themselves, from the low prices of sugar, which scarcely pay the expenses of cultivation. It is the happy mixture of land eligible for every kind of industry that will enable the inhabitants of this island to raise sugar, when the other islands will have to abandon it, or to sink immense capitals without the prospect of a suitable return. It is then that this island will feel the advantages of having attended to the cultivation of the variety of products which it yields, and will be led to pay more attention to the bettering of the breed of horned cattle and sheep.

AGRICULTURE.—It would be presumptuous in me to arrogate to myself a knowledge I do not possess, by attempting to offer a complete view of tropical agriculture. My object is to show the progress the island has made in this important branch of human industry; to compare it with other colonies; and to furnish all the information I have been able to obtain from personal observation, or from individuals competent to form a correct judgment. To use an expression of the celebrated Sully, "Agriculture is the breast from which the state receives nourishment, strength, and energy; consequently it cannot be too much protected and encouraged."

In order to be able to compare the produce of the lands of this island with that of the colonies of other nations, it is necessary to give a clear idea of the measure used for surveying land in Puerto Rico. The agrarian measure of this island, although bearing the same name as that of the island of Cuba, differs essentially from it. The measures of the French and English islands are also different. The caballeria of Puerto Rico measures ten cords in breadth, and twenty in length; each cord con-

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taining seventy-five Castilian yards. Each caballeria, therefore, contains 200 cords, and every cord is one-tenth less than an English acre.

Sugar Culture.—In consequence of the small capital required, the inhabitants formerly applied themselves solely to the breeding of cattle and the cultivation of coffee. But sugar bearing a high price some few years ago, and the land being extremely well adapted for its production, many foreigners from the neighbouring colonies, well instructed in sugar culture, were induced to settle in the island. Several capitals were thus employed, and the number of sugar estates established within the last twenty years exceeds 200. At this moment there are upwards of 300 sugar estates established; besides upwards of 1300 minor plantations belonging to poor persons, who, growing only an acre or two of cane, press out the juice in a wooden mill, and make sugar or molasses for their own use and for sale. This has been, till within the last few years, a most lucrative branch of agriculture, but it has now decreased very much in value in all the colonies. The land of this island may be said as yet to be in a virgin state; therefore no decrease has been observed in the quantity of production. Nor has it been found necessary to strengthen its productive power by the aid of manure, as they are obliged to do at a great expense of labour in the foreign colonies, in order to produce a forced vegetation.

Irrigation has not been adopted in any part of the island, although on the south coast, where the rains are scanty, there is no doubt but that it would be highly beneficial. The roots of the plants in those dry districts are moistened by the water which is always to be found half a yard beneath the surface of the earth.

On the north and east coasts, where the principal

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grazing districts are situate, the pastures are intermixed with plantations of sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco. There are some sugar estates on a large scale in the valleys of Toabajo, Truxillo, Bayamo, and Arecibo, which produce sugar of an excellent quality, and the land is fertile in the extreme. On the western coast, the rich and fertile valley of Mayagues was much advanced in agriculture in 1828; there were twenty-one sugar estates in its vicinity well established, sixty-two small plantations of cane, with wooden mills, and twenty-one coffee estates, besides innumerable small plantations. It produced in 1828, on the lowest possible calculation, 70,000 quintals of sugar, 55,600 quintals of coffee, 1,664,400 quarts of molasses, and 3328 puncheons of rum. The property was valued at 2,092,860 dollars, and produced 798,894 dollars. Since 1828 a great number of new estates have been established, which add considerably to the produce, as will be observed by referring to the total produce of the island in the year 1830. The soil of Mayagues and of the neighbouring valley of Añasco, is a deep black loam, moist and without stones. On an average it may be calculated that one acre of land with another produces at least forty quintals of sugar on every part of the island: some very fertile soils produce considerably more. The lands on the south coast are generally occupied by cane fields, particularly in the districts of Ponce and Guayamo, famed for their extraordinary fertility. They enjoy a regular dry season, which enables the planters to make their harvest at a stated period of the year, as they do in Barbadoes and Jamaica, without which a large sugar estate cannot be properly managed.

Unfortunately for the planters on the south coast, the drought continues sometimes for eight, ten, and twelve months successively, parching up the grass in such a

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manner that there is no food for the bullocks and horses, except the cane-tops. Therefore the planters have not the advantage, as on the north coast, of uniting the breeding of cattle with agriculture. They are obliged to send their cattle into the interior of the mountains, where frequent rains keep up a verdant and abundant supply of good grass. The planters of this coast, also, formerly depended almost entirely on foreign countries for the food of their negroes, but since the depression in the price of sugar, they have mostly opened a communication by good roads with the mountains, and cleared land for sowing provisions; and such has been their activity, that this year (1833) they will have an abundant supply, and, I trust, henceforward will not need to depend on foreign aid. It is this system of economy and of active industry in the raising of provisions that can alone save this island from the misery into which the low price of sugar has plunged, I fear irretrievably, the French and English colonies.

In the year 1828, there were in Ponce forty-nine sugar estates, besides forty small plantations with wooden mills, and twenty-one coffee estates; and that district produced 57,190 quintals of sugar, 490,200 quarts of molasses, 8788 quintals of coffee, and 1704 quintals of cotton. The property was valued at 1,275,859 dollars, and produced 438,018 dollars. Five of the sugar estates had steam engines for grinding the canes. Since 1828 several new estates have been formed. They are generally on the same footing as in the English and French islands with respect to regularity and the system of cultivation.

Guayama, which is also situate on the south coast, bids fair to rival Ponce and Mayagues in agricultural importance. Five or six years ago it was an immense tract of woodland. It is perfectly level, and the soil is very

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rich, though dry. In 1828 there were only eighteen sugar estates in this district, and in 1830 there were thirty-three. Six of them are furnished with excellent steam engines, and on a scale of magnitude formerly unknown in this island. There were also twelve coffee estates. It produced in 1828, 27,907 quintals of sugar; but this year it will produce at least 50,000 quintals. It also produced the same year, 554,000 quarts of molasses, 63 puncheons of rum, 2432 quintals of superior tobacco,—a production for which this district is famed,—and 2677 quintals of coffee; all of which products have been nearly doubled this year. The agricultural wealth was valued in 1828 at 579,493 dollars, and the produce at 164,186 dollars. This is undoubtedly the district which has flourished most in the short period of its establishment, and bids fair to rival Ponce and Mayagues in commerce and agriculture. Besides having good roads, the port is excellent, and safe for shipping at all seasons of the year. Patillas, which is contiguous to Guayama, and may be considered a continuation of the same valley, had eight sugar estates and one coffee estate in 1828; but since that time, three or four new sugar establishments have been formed. It produced the same year 9150 quintals of sugar, 45,000 quarts of molasses, 52 puncheons of rum, 664 quintals of tobacco, and 490 quintals of coffee.

I have thus enumerated the chief agricultural districts where the sugar-cane is manufactured. But every part of the island, with the exception of the south coast, which is almost exclusively under the cultivation of cane without any pasture land, exhibits a promiscuous intermixture of fields of sugar-cane, coffee, maize, rice, plantains, tobacco, and pasture. Notwithstanding the continued drought, which reigns often for a year on the south coast, water

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is invariably found at three quarters of a yard from the surface of the earth, which preserves the cane vigorous. The rivers, although they diminish considerably during this drought, always preserve a considerable quantity of water, which might be usefully employed in irrigation. It is to be hoped that enterprising and industrious individuals will not neglect the advantages which are always produced by well-regulated irrigation in dry soils.

The cultivation of the sugar-cane by slave labour requires a very considerable investment of capital. It may be compared to a complicated piece of machinery, composed of many wheels, which are intimately connected with each other, and revolving the same circle. If any of these fails in its motion, or becomes defective, the regular and uniform movement of the whole becomes obstructed; and without sufficient capital, no remedy can be applied by the unassisted efforts of genius or industry.

The legal exportation of sugar from this island in the year 1829, according to the custom-house books, was 277,154½ quintals.* The internal consumption of sugar in Cuba in 1794, when the population did not exceed 362,000 persons, was calculated at 298,000 arrobas, or 74,500 quintals.† On a very moderate calculation, therefore, we may reasonably suppose that an equal quantity is consumed in Puerto Rico, whose population rather exceeds that amount, and where the number of free people is greater in proportion to the number of slaves;

* In 1803, Puerto Rico produced 2632 quintals: in 1810, 37,969 quintals; in 1828, 197,786 quintals, 67 lbs.; in 1829, 277,154½ quintals; in 1830, 414,663 quintals, 76 lbs., which is more than double what was produced in 1828.

† An arroba is 25 lbs. weight.—In 1775, the island of Cuba produced, according to Father Inigo, 10,949 arrobas of sugar, 4475 arrobas of cotton, 45,049 arrobas of coffee, 28,070 arrobas of tobacco, and 78,884 arrobas of botyas melado.

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and thus, without allowing any thing for the quantity exported by illicit trade, we have a total of 414,663 quintals produced in 1830. It may appear an exorbitant allowance to put down one-quarter of the sugar exported, as being sent out of the country clandestinely; but it is to be considered, that although the custom-house allows each hogshead to hold only ten quintals, the planters generally have them made to hold from twelve to sixteen quintals each. This, however, does not happen, I believe, in the custom-house of the capital, where the sugar is weighed, but it most certainly occurs in all the custom-houses on the coast, from whence the greatest quantity of sugar is exported. We find that this branch of agriculture alone produces, even in the present depressed state of sugar, at four dollars per quintal, 1,683,768 dollars.

The proportion of sugar produced to the land employed in its cultivation in the British islands, compared with Puerto Rico, is as follows. In Jamaica, it is computed that, on an average, ten quintals of sugar is raised per acre; in Dominica the same; Grenada produces fifteen quintals per acre; Antigua, seven and a half quintals per acre; St. Kitt's, twenty quintals per acre; St. Vincent's, twenty-five quintals per acre; Tobago, twenty quintals per acre. According to the best and most correct information, gained from intelligent planters who had no motives for deception, the whole average produce of Puerto Rico may be taken at thirty quintals per acre; which fully agrees with the amount of sugar produced, according to the computed extent of land in cultivation; and proves the exactness of the calculation I have already made, that the land of this island produces more than double the quantity raised on the best lands in the most favoured of the British Antilles, under all the disadvantages of inferior

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cultivation. The quantity of land under cane in 1829, was 11,084 acres; which gives about thirty-nine quintals per acre on an average in the whole island. But as this calculation of 11,084 acres includes the small quantities of cane grown by poor people for their own consumption, which is made into molasses and rum, or cut for chewing, in which mode a great quantity is consumed, the calculation that this island produces on fertile soils forty quintals per acre on an average, is rather under the real fact: to prove which, I could cite several instances, but shall confine myself to one. The estate of the archdean of the cathedral, which has been many years established, has for fifteen years successively produced upwards of 5000 quintals of sugar, with only ninety acres of land under cane; and some years it has produced 6000 quintals and upwards. This estate is situate on the best lands near Ponce. The good lands which are in Guayama and Mayagues are equally productive. An individual who purchased an estate a few years ago in Ponce, which was valued at 100,000 dollars, in five years, besides maintaining himself and the estate, paid off the whole purchase-money, the property remaining free profit. This, however, occurred when sugar bore a high price; and it must be admitted as a general fact, that even under the favourable circumstances in which Puerto Rico is placed, the sugar cane cannot be profitably cultivated by slave labour alone, without the intermixture of other objects of industry. Without the aid of these, the planter must sink money every year; while with his negroes located as *free labourers*, a highly remunerating profit, as I shall afterwards demonstrate, may be certainly obtained.

The establishment of a sugar plantation in this as well as in every other West India colony, requires considerable capital to be sunk in the works. Besides making

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choice of good land, a sufficient supply of labourers is necessary, with cattle, and surplus capital to meet exigencies. The want of any of these would be quite sufficient to render the operation of the rest inert, and a capital which might be useful in other speculations would be lost. If, under such disadvantageous circumstances, the planter should persist in the manufacture of sugar, he never rises beyond a state of continual embarrassment and penury. This truth is confirmed by daily experience, and by the united testimony of those who are acquainted with this laborious species of culture, which is complicated beyond any thing known in the agriculture of Europe, requiring chemical science and local knowledge to aid its progress. What benefit can the planter expect to derive from the best land covered with cane in the most perfect state of cultivation, if he has not a sufficient number of labourers and cattle? or if his mill be out of order when the season of grinding arrives, or his carts and his boilers broken by accident, if he has not money lying by him, or cannot get a prompt supply of money at a moderate interest, to enable him to proceed in his crop by repairing the damages? He has no alternative at present in Puerto Rico, but to lose his crop, or to take money at such an enormous interest that it is a problem whether it would be less ruinous to lose the crop or to accept the loan. Besides the want of capital to support the heavy expenses of a sugar establishment, and the great expense of slave labour, we must ascribe the backward state of some of the planters in Puerto Rico, and the ruin of others, to the want of domestic economy, occasioned by a display of luxury beyond their means, and the vice of gaming, which is unhappily too prevalent. Their property is thus often placed at the mercy of the merchant, who, if he lend money, exacts for it four, and sometimes

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ten per cent. per month,—besides charging at the same time a high commission for the produce consigned to him; for although the laws prohibit the lending of money at a higher rate than six per cent., yet this regulation is easily evaded by fictitious agreements by the parties concerned. But industry has its reward even in the planting of cane, with all its difficulties, and perhaps examples can be adduced in this island of success as remarkable as in any other colony in the world. I here offer a living example. A French gentleman from St. Domingo, who had only 3000 dollars capital, established himself on very inferior land on the north side of the island, near the capital, and commenced planting cane. In less than eight years he had thirty slaves, and his property was valued, in 1832, at 40,000 dollars.*

Notwithstanding the great expense attending the cultivation of cane, and the knowledge and practice necessary, a sugar establishment in this island, with a moderate capital, and managed with prudence and economy, and with free labour, may produce a handsome income, even at the present low price of sugar, if mixed with other objects of industry for which the country is so well adapted. It will, in fact, return an interest for the money expended double that of any other island in the West Indies. I will hereafter endeavour to show at what expense a sugar plantation may be established in this island, with the reasonable profits that may be expected to arise from it, upon data obtained from planters of knowledge, experience, and veracity. But as sugar has fallen considerably this year (1833), the casual price of one or two years of bad

*A few days after writing the above passage, having occasion to consult this intelligent and active planter on the state of cane cultivation, he assured me that the cane *at present* (1833) does not pay the expense of cultivation: but that as he also raises coffee, plants provisions, and rears cattle, he is enabled to support his establishment and maintain his family without sinking his capital.

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sales is scarcely a fair valuation; for as it has now become an article of almost necessary consumption in every part of the world, it can scarcely ever fall lower than it is at present, and I think there is every probability of its again rising, and maintaining a reasonable price, with as much certainty as any other colonial production.

In the year 1825, a sugar plantation in Jamaica, of 500 acres of land, of which 200 acres were cultivated in cane, produced by the labour of 200 slaves, 100 bullocks, and 50 mules, 2800 quintals of sugar, and was worth, including the slaves, £43,000 sterling, or nearly 215,000 dollars; which, compared to an estate in this island of 200 acres of land, worked by 40 negroes, and 50 bullocks, that produces 2000 quintals of sugar annually from a capital of 48,540 dollars, including the value of the land, leaves a difference in favour of Puerto Rico which would be incredible were it not proved by clear demonstration. The very low price of sugar this year has thrown a great damp on its cultivation, and I fear there is no reason to expect any immediate increase in price. I am convinced, however, that even at three dollars per quintal it may be cultivated to advantage in this island by free labour, mixing it, as I have already stated, with other branches of agriculture; for I have here stated the proceeds on the supposition that the provisions for the negroes were purchased,—an expense which can be avoided in this island by the least attention to industry. The cultivation of the sugar cane is so widely extended at present to different parts of the earth, that any causes which may occasion its cultivation to be abandoned in some parts of the West Indies, cannot well raise the price to that rate which it maintained when it was confined to a small circle. We must also bear in mind, that one great cause of the cheapness of sugar is

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the immense quantity that is produced in the East Indies by free labour at a cheap rate. The produce of a cord of land in India is calculated to be double the produce of a cord of the best land in the West Indies; while the daily pay of a labourer is two-thirds less than the maintenance of the negro slave in Cuba or Jamaica. This in some measure accounts for the cheapness of cultivation in India, and the consequent lowness of East India sugar. However, I see no reason, notwithstanding the present low price of sugar, why the people of this island should despair; for when cultivated by free labour it still leaves a reasonable profit: besides, let them reflect, that in the French and English islands, in which the sugar cane is cultivated at such labour and expense, many planters must, in all probability, ere long give up planting, and consequently there must be a greater demand for the sugar of this island. It would be, therefore, highly imprudent hastily to abandon this branch of agriculture; it would be more advisable to mix it with other branches less expensive, and from whose produce the estate may be maintained,—a resource on which the planters of the French and English colonies cannot calculate.

In a subsequent chapter I shall enter into a careful examination of the comparative advantages of free and slave labour in sugar cultivation.

COFFEE.—It is of little importance, at the present day, to state that coffee was not known to the Greeks or Romans,—to investigate its origin in the East,—or to follow its course until it was introduced into Europe in the sixteenth century. It is now an article of commercial importance, and I only propose to shew the state of its cultivation in Puerto Rico, and the quantity that is produced by free labour. None of the productions of the tropics has undergone greater vicissitudes in price than

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coffee. Some years it has risen to 25 dollars per quintal, while at others it has fallen as low as three dollars. The soil and temperature of Puerto Rico are peculiarly adapted to the production of this plant. Its culture is simple, and unattended with much expense; and it has the advantage of being generally cultivated by free labourers of all colours. So early as the year 1778, Puerto Rico produced 11,163 quintals, 25 lbs. of coffee; in 1828, it exported 111,609 quintals, 64 lbs.; in 1829, 121,151 quintals; in 1830, 169,119 quintals; and in 1832, the exports, together with the consumption of the inhabitants, which is very great,—for every poor negro, as well as the more wealthy proprietor, takes coffee three or four times a day,—amounted to at least 250,000 quintals. The coffee, last year, brought on the spot from eleven to thirteen dollars; and this staple alone left to the island upwards of two millions of dollars; which in a great measure compensates for the losses sustained by the sugar planters.

There are 148 coffee estates on the island, which, in consequence of the low price of coffee for several years, were abandoned by their owners, as likewise happened in the English and French colonies. But although the large estates cultivated by slaves were abandoned, yet there was notwithstanding, (and always will be, let the price be ever so low,) a considerable quantity of coffee raised; for every white labourer, and free negro and mulatto, has invariably a few coffee tree plants around his house, shaded by the plantain trees. These coffee trees they allow to grow to an unlimited height; they never cut or prune them, as is done on the estates. I have never beheld coffee trees of such a magnitude; they resemble the description I have read of the mode of cultivating coffee in Arabia. This plant, on the estates, pruned and cut low, is calculated to yield a pound of coffee for

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each tree, on an average; but I have seen a single tree in its natural state in Puerto Rico yield twenty, thirty, and even forty pounds weight of coffee. Each poor family has twenty or thirty trees; and even in the woods trees are to be found in a wild state loaded with coffee. The free labourers, at the harvest, are seen coming in to market, some with fifty pounds, others with a quintal, and so on, which is the surplus of their little crop, after leaving enough for the use of their families for the season. They sell it to the merchants, in order to purchase articles of clothing. Thus the island of Puerto Rico will always have coffee for exportation by free labour, when the price shall become so low as to render it impossible to cultivate it in large plantations in the French and English islands by slaves. I have already shewn, that although the 148 coffee estates, which I grant may be in some measure cultivated by slaves in Puerto Rico, may produce 300 quintals each,—it would only, on a maximum, make 44,400 quintals produced by slaves, while the remaining 205,600 quintals are produced by free labour.

The manner of collecting the coffee berries by the poor people in Puerto Rico, may be compared to the manner practised in Arabia. The trees are so lofty that the berries cannot be picked by the hand; they are therefore allowed to become perfectly ripe; the trees are then shaken, and the fruit is dried on mats until every particle of moisture has disappeared. The coffee of Puerto Rico has in consequence of this a peculiar fragrance, owing, no doubt, to the care taken in plucking and preparing it by free labourers interested in its being of a superior quality, and to the facility of curing a small quantity. The poor people, who can with such facility cultivate a few trees around their houses, should not neglect to plant them, because, although the price of this

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staple should fall one year in consequence of an overstock, yet as it cannot long be cultivated by slave labour in the other colonies, they will be amply repaid eventually for any little trouble which it costs them.

There is no doubt that the cultivation of coffee, even on a large scale, is infinitely cheaper by free than by slave labour. In Colombia, all the estates formerly cultivated by slaves are now cultivated by freemen. The task-work given in one day to a free labourer is always double to that given to the slaves; nor have I ever seen a slave pick half the quantity of coffee in the same time as the other could. Besides, the slaves on the estates have no interest whether the coffee turns out to be of a good or bad quality; they pick the ripe and the unripe berries indiscriminately, and they are equally careless in attending to the process of drying, which requires much watchfulness.

Whoever takes the trouble to examine this statement will perceive that it would be of very little importance either to the prosperity or the increase of commerce in this island, if the few coffee estates cultivated by slaves were entirely abandoned,—that is, if these slaves were liberated; for the free labourers can always furnish a supply. When the planters in the other islands shall be compelled to abandon its cultivation altogether, the freemen will reap a golden harvest. I trust, therefore, that they will continue to cultivate it in the same prudent manner as hitherto, on a small scale.

INDIGO.—Indigo is a plant that grows spontaneously, and is found wild in different parts of this island. This is a proof that it may be successfully cultivated An experiment made on a small scale, by way of trial, might produce beneficial effects. It may be cultivated by free labourers; for at this day, and for some years past, it is

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raised altogether in this manner in the valleys of Aragùa, in the province of Venezuela, although it is considered to be the most laborious and unhealthy, as well as the most productive article of tropical agriculture. It is not necessary to construct expensive tanks and buildings for its elaboration: it may be prepared on a small scale, by steeping the plant, when cut, in wooden troughs,— a plan which has been already tried in Cuba, with great advantage, and at a trifling expense. Enterprising individuals of small capital, and the free blacks, will find it their interest to make an experiment of the efficacy of this system; they can lose but little, and they may gain much by the trial. Were the government to try the experiment, by planting an acre or two of land with indigo, under the direction of intelligent and practical men, who are to be found among the emigrants from South America, the fact would be ascertained as to the real benefit arising from its cultivation on a small scale; the lower classes of the people, ignorant and naturally supine,—enemies to improvement and innovation,—would thus be stimulated to exertion; and a new branch of rural industry would be fostered which could scarcely fail to prove peculiarly beneficial to a country inhabited by a large proportion of free labourers.

Tobacco.—Tobacco may be cultivated in every part of the island. The quality is excellent, being little inferior to that produced in the island of Cuba, the fame of which is known in every part of the globe. It is exclusively cultivated by free labour. Poor families, white and black, plant a half or a quarter of an acre, and the produce is cured and disposed of to the shopkeepers in the villages, who are generally agents for the more extensive merchants of the capital. These shopkeepers furnish clothes and money in advance at an enormous interest to the poor cultivators, on condition that they

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sell them their whole crop at a certain price, always less than half its value.

In the year 1803, the whole quantity of tobacco legally exported from the island, was 972 quintals of 112 lbs. each; in 1810 it amounted to 6541 quintals; in 1828, to 23,963 quintals; in 1829, to 31,694 quintals; and in 1830, to 34,902 quintals, 26 lbs. This is exclusive of the quantity consumed on the island, the amount of which it is very difficult to ascertain, and of what we may suppose to be carried away in a clandestine manner.

There is a great want of capital among those who cultivate the tobacco plant. Were the government, with that liberal policy by which it patronized its cultivation in the province of Venezuela, to furnish the small landed proprietors with funds adequate to defray the expense attendant on the cultivation, to be repaid in kind at a stipulated price when cured, Cuba and Puerto Rico would be able to furnish a quantity of excellent tobacco,—more than sufficient to supply the Peninsula, which now receives an immense annual importation from the United States of America.

COTTON.—All the cotton produced on the island is by free labour; but I regret to observe that very little attention has yet been given to the cultivation of an article of such great importance. In 1803, there was exported 917 quintals; in 1810, 220 quintals; in 1828, 4781 quintals, 90¼ lbs.; in 1830, 6633 quintals. This plant is cultivated by the poor families of whites and free negroes, without either capital or any great exertion. The smallest children are made useful in picking cotton from the trees. In the British islands of the Bahamas, also, whole families have no other means of living, and they derive from it a comfortable subsistence. It were to be wished that the free labourers of Puerto Rico would

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turn their attention more to this useful branch of industry. There is a constant demand for cotton by the Spanish vessels trading to the Peninsula; and many of them are obliged to proceed to St. Thomas in order to obtain a suitable return cargo. The demand for cotton wool is continually increasing; it cannot, therefore, be doubted that its cultivation may become highly advantageous to the free labourers. Besides, let it be remembered, that the cotton of Puerto Rico equals in quality the best cotton of Berbice, Surinam, or Pernambuco, which bears a higher price in the European market than that of any other country. Aware of the necessity of directing the attention of the working classes in the colonies to the most beneficial species of industry, I have selected, from the experience of practical men, all the best information respecting the manner in which small capitals may be employed in cultivating cotton by free labour, and the returns that may be reasonably expected. It is of the highest importance that men who depend on their own exertions for subsistence should be instructed how to employ their time and labour to the best advantage, for it is on their united exertions and industry that we must ground the future prosperity and security of the colonies.

Land may be purchased for the cultivation of cotton much cheaper than for sugar. Let us therefore suppose that a small farm of fifty acres, at ten dollars per acre, would take 500

Maximum of the expense of cleaning the land, and planting twenty-five acres, at twenty dollars per acre 500

Building a wooden house 250

Utensils 50

$ 1300

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Thirteen hundred dollars is, therefore, the cost of establishing a cotton farm of fifty acres with free labour. We are now to consider the returns which may be reasonably expected from this small capital. In Puerto Rico, it is very generally supposed that an acre of cotton will yield annually from 150 to 200 lbs. of cotton; but it may in favourable years produce double that quantity. The cotton was sold at Puerto Rico last season for twenty dollars per quintal; therefore, assuming that every acre only produced 150 lbs., which is a very low calculation, it would make 3750 lbs. the produce of 25 acres; which, sold at twenty dollars per quintal, would amount to 750 dollars; and even supposing that the work of the labourers employed in cultivating it absorbed one-half of the profits, still it would yield an immense profit for the capital sunk. But, by keeping three or four cows, and planting provisions on the remaining 25 acres, their produce would be more than sufficient, if properly managed, to pay not only for the clothes and maintenance of the family, but also to cover all the disbursements necessary to hire labourers. It is also customary to raise corn, sweet potatoes, and yams, between the ranks of cotton trees; an industrious family, therefore, might be very comfortable on a capital which in Europe would be a mere trifle.

CACAO.—Cacao would be well adapted to the soil of this island; but the dreadful hurricanes by which it is visited would render its cultivation extremely precarious, for which reason there is not a single plantation of this fruit on the island.

PROVISIONS.—I have thus, from the most accurate information I could collect from persons of intelligence, and from personal observation, given the best idea my slender knowledge can afford of the principal exportable productions of Puerto Rico, which constitute its chief

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riches, and, well directed, will contribute essentially to promote the commerce and navigation of the mother country. Were I to enter minutely into the economy of all the minor articles of agricultural produce, such as maize, ground-provisions, &c., I should exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself in this work. I am, however, well aware of the great value of these articles. They will always be powerful auxiliaries to a well-organized system of agriculture, and are of peculiar importance to the welfare of the colony now that the great staples of sugar and coffee have been so much reduced in price as to make the choice of what to raise a serious consideration to the planters. The high price of sugar and coffee in former years made the planters look with contempt on the less profitable cultivation of provisions. So much was this branch neglected that the island, though teeming with fertility, depended for provisions, for the slaves and for the generality of the inhabitants, on foreign countries,—when by proper management the inhabitants might have raised abundance of provisions for home consumption and for a foreign market.

There were provisions imported into this island in the year 1810 to the amount of 343,064 dollars; in 1829, to 198,190 dollars, 7 reals; and they have been reduced in 1832 to 457,981 dollars; which proves that the people are applying themselves with ardour to this branch of rural economy.

Rice.—The crops of rice are abundant, and the quality is excellent. The land gives three crops annually, while in the other islands it only yields two. In 1829 the island is supposed to have produced, according to government returns, only 52,188 quintals of rice; and in 1831 it produced upwards of 76,000 quintals, which was consumed in the island. But in consequence of the

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rigid orders issued by the captain-general to every department, compelling every peasant to cultivate in provisions one or two acres of land, an immense increase has been observed in every class of provisions; so much so, that in the ensuing year there will be a surplus for exportation. Last year 410½ quintals of rice were exported through the custom-house.

MAIZE, YAMS, &c.—Indian corn is also produced in abundance. In 1832, upwards of 1500 fanegas were exported. Yams, plantains, and all the minor productions of ground provisions, are attended to, and will form an important part of the riches of the country; and I hope that next year a large portion will be exported. In 1830, in plantains, Indian-corn, and other provisions, the amount of 15,000 dollars was exported, besides the quantities carried away without paying duties. I cannot resist my inclination to annex a calculation made by a friend respecting the produce of plantains, which is curious and instructive, and will, I trust, induce the natives of this island to more active exertion, in order to obtain a larger share of the comforts of life, and to render the island what it was by nature intended to be,—one of the most productive spots on the face of the earth.

Calculation of the Profits arising from a Plantain Grove.

A proof more convincing of the extraordinary fertility of this island than the following calculation of the produce of nineteen acres of land under plantains, cultivated by one man, cannot be offered. I shall proceed to demonstrate the truth of what is known by experience, that the labour of one man yearly will maintain 240 individuals for the same period. A cord of land (which is one-tenth less than an English acre) will contain 625 plantain trees, planted in the usual manner. The number of shoots

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which are left to each tree under proper culture, is three. Each shoot yields one bunch of plantains yearly, and every bunch on an average contains twenty-five plantains, which gives for every tree annually seventy-five plantains. The original trees being 625, the number produced by one cord of land will be 46,875 plantains. The plantain groves require very little cultivation. The grass that grows among the plants is trifling, in consequence of the shade cast by their large and spreading leaves. The moderate work of a free labourer in a plantain grove daily, is to clear from weeds an extent of land measuring five yards in breadth, and twenty-five in length; so that one man is able with ease to weed a cord of land in five days. Calculating three weedings annually, which is the most required, one man, working fifteen days in the year, can keep it in a perfect state of cultivation. Deducting from the year 75 Sundays and holidays, the working days will be reduced to 290 days, and this number being divided by 15, which is the number of days necessary for one man to keep a cord of plantain trees in order, we find that by the work of one man nineteen cords of land under plantains may be kept in perfect order. Each cord will yield, according to the foregoing calculation, 46,875 plantains, which, multiplied by 19, the number of cords which one man can cultivate, we shall have 890,625, which is the total produce in plantains of nineteen cords. Supposing that a man will consume ten plantains daily (which is a liberal allowance), he will require for a year's subsistence 3650 plantains. Therefore, dividing the number of plantains produced by the labour of one man, 890,625, we find the number 244, which represents the number of men which may be maintained with this fruit by the moderate labour of one individual.

To the inhabitant of Europe, who does not know, or

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cannot conceive the fertility of this soil, or the productive force of tropical vegetation, this calculation may appear extravagant, but it is nevertheless very exact and true.

The amount of capital required to undertake this species of industry is no less surprising. Nineteen cords of the best land may cost at the maximum . . . $1900
The simple implements necessary for this class of cultivation 100
Clearing and preparing nineteen cords of land . 200
Making a fence 160
Allowing three bullocks and a horse for working, the former at 40 dollars each, the horse at 30 . 150
Two slaves to take care of the animals, &c.* . 800

Capital 3310

We have already observed that nineteen cords of plantain trees produce 890,625 plantains, which, sold at the lowest customary price, twenty-four for a real, or six-pence sterling, or 192 for a dollar, or four shillings, are worth 4639 dollars, which is more than 140 per cent. on the capital employed.

This calculation is made, supposing the plantains to be sold on the spot, without the other incidental expenses and carriage to market, which, from the distance and their being carried on the backs of horses, is very expensive. I shall therefore deduct the expenses which are generally observed in this island. The maintenance and wages of a free day labourer may cost, on the highest possible calculation, 200 dollars yearly. The general load for a horse or mule is 288 plantains, which, at the price already

* Supposing slaves necessary to take care of the animals; but with free labourers it would be still cheaper.

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stated, makes twelve reals, or one and a half dollars, or six shillings sterling, the value of every load; and allowing one dollar or four shillings sterling for the hire of each horse and the man who drives him, the proprietor of the plantain grove finds himself reduced to the third part of the value of his harvest; that is to say that it is reduced from 4438 dollars to 1479. But there is still a further deduction to be made in the hire of the labourer who cuts the bunches of plantains. It may be estimated that a man will cut 122 bunches per day; and as it is hard labour, he is paid five reals, or two shillings and sixpence sterling, per day; the total of his yearly wages thus amounts to 181 dollars yearly,—which, deducted from 1479, leaves a nett profit of 1298 dollars yearly, or 39⅓ per cent. annually, on a capital of 3310 dollars; a rate of profit not to be met with in European agriculture.

This calculation exhibits the extraordinary productive power of the island, and what may be expected from persevering industry. It also serves to show the imperative necessity of constructing good roads, in order to facilitate the carriage of produce from the interior to market; for we find in this simple calculation, what also holds good of every other class of productions, that the carriage to market absorbs two-thirds of the profits.

In making the foregoing calculation, I have not taken into account the misfortunes which may occur some years from hurricanes, because this extends to almost every class of tropical productions.

It were to be wished that scientific experiments should be made on this invaluable fruit, which may be considered to be the *bread* of the inhabitants of this island. There is no doubt that the plantain may be dried and exported like figs, or reduced to meal; in fact, the ingenious might invent many useful means of imparting still

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greater value to one of the most valuable productions of the torrid zone. It might be made, perhaps, an article of valuable exportation, and be looked on as a luxury in foreign countries.

BEES.—There is nothing, however trifling, that should be overlooked, when we treat of the prosperity of a country. The smallest branch of industry leads to others of greater importance, and capitals can only be formed in new countries by degrees, and from small beginnings. The breeding of bees would, in my opinion, and in the opinion of those who are acquainted with the nature of this class of industry, be most advantageous. We have seen the immense exportations of wax from the Havannah, and the increasing demand for this useful article in every part of the world. It were to be wished that some patriotic individuals would unite to make a trial of 1000 hives, and keep an exact account of the produce. No country in the world is better calculated for this class of industry: almost all the inhabitants living in the country, every family might have half a dozen hives, as they have their coffee trees; and thus insensibly, without expense or risk, only with a little care, a new source of riches to the inhabitants, and of revenue to the government, would rise and advance in a few years: and we know by the wild bees found in the woods, that this useful insect is not a stranger to the country.

EXPERIMENTAL FARM.—A few acres of land, placed under the control and inspection of men of science, to make experiments in agriculture, and to point out to the inhabitants practically, the best and most effective manner of cultivating with success the different fruits and vegetables of the torrid zone, would be a most useful and patriotic undertaking. I understand an estate of this kind, intended as a model, has been established at the

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Havannah. I do not see any reason why the inhabitants of this island should not also form an institution of this nature, which offers so many advantages. The beams of scientific knowledge would thus enlighten their agricultural labours, and render them more easy and productive.

FRUIT TREES.—I have observed generally in the island, that very few fruit trees are planted round the plantations. This is a very unfortunate omission. It costs very little to plant a tree, and immense advantages arise from their culture. In the first place, the oxygen from the trees is healthy to man; they form a shade for cattle; they supply wood for fire, and timber for agricultural instruments and other purposes. Besides, the fruit is not only useful to man, but the pigs and fowls participate in the advantages. I would most strenuously recommend attention to the cultivation of fruit trees, which costs little trouble, and is abundantly useful in every point of view.

TIMBER.—The forests which cover the mountains of Puerto Rico are filled with timber of the best quality for the construction of ships and houses. In some parts of the coasts, from the very improvident manner in which wood has been cut down, and burnt for charcoal, and much left to rot on the ground, timber is getting scarce; but in the interior there is yet an abundance of superior timber. The government has most wisely ordered that three trees should be planted for every one cut down. It is to be hoped that this order may be rigorously enforced; for, in the first place, wood is the great and principal agent in the atmosphere for the attraction of the clouds; secondly, it is of vital importance that the government should have a supply of useful timber for the construction of ships, for gun-carriages, and for building. If these laws on this head are carried into force by the local magistrates, the island will always have on it an inex-

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haustible source of timber; but if, on the contrary, these useful precepts are not followed, water will become scarce; the rivers will dry up; the fields will become scorched savannahs for want of moisture; the cattle will find neither food nor shade from the noon-day sun; and this beautiful and fertile island will at once be deprived of its enchanting verdure, its fertility, and its riches. This is not the dream of imagination, or the ridiculous prognostication of ideal ills. I am aware that this cannot happen before the expiration of a century; but it is the duty of governments and individuals to look forward to posterity. It is their duty, by wise and prudent measures, to foresee and prevent, at the present day, the ills which may be inflicted on future generations by undue considerations or concessions of temporary interest. In 1830, timber to the value of 21,000 dollars was exported through the custom-houses of this island, exclusively of what is shipped clandestinely.

HORTICULTURE.—Horticulture is very little understood or practised in Puerto Rico, notwithstanding its great utility and advantages, uniting the useful with the ornamental, and yielding greater profits than any other branch of agriculture. With the exception of a few vegetables badly cultivated, near the capital, and in the vicinity of the other large towns, there is nothing in the island in the shape of a garden. Few of the estates raise vegetables even for their own use; yet all the vegetables of Europe could be produced without much trouble. Cauliflowers and peas grow in different parts of the island. The general extension of this class of cultivation would be of great public utility, besides the salutary and pleasant occupation it would afford. The inhabitants must be convinced that this, and every other class of rural economy, however trifling in the eyes of the superficial observer taken

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separately, form, on the whole, the great riches of an agricultural country. It is from the small savings of many that capitals accumulate, and form the riches, the prosperity, and the power of a nation.

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CHAPTER VII.

Present Condition of the White, Free-Coloured, and Slave Population in the Islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, as compared with the same Classes in other European Colonies—Aboriginal Population of Puerto Rico partially amalgamated with the Conquerors—Census of Cuba and Puerto Rico—Relative Proportions of the different Classes—Great Numerical Superiority of the Whites, and Comparative Safety of the Spanish Colonies—Distribution of the Population in Puerto Rico—Proportion between the Sexes—Tables of Births, Marriages, and Deaths—Rapid Increase of the Population in Puerto Rico and Cuba, contrasted with the continual Decrease in other West India Colonies—Encouragement of Marriage in the Spanish Colonies, and Moral Advantages of the Free Coloured and Slave Population—Neglect of Marriage, and deplorable Profligacy exhibited in the French, British, and Danish Islands—Degradation of the Free Mulattoes, and Decrease of their Numbers in the French Islands—Amount of the White Population in the British, French, and Danish Islands, compared with the same Class in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

THE heterogeneous mixture of classes and colours, which forms so striking a feature in the population of the West India islands, has a corresponding effect on society and manners, and distinguishes the inhabitants in all the relations

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of social life from the nations of civilized Europe. To compare the progress of countries lying between the tropics, in population, arts, and sciences, with the advancement observed in the nations of the old world, would be to compare things between which there exists little or no analogy. In order to be able to form an opinion somewhat approaching to truth with respect to the present state of the West India islands, and of their improvement or decay under the rule of different European governments, we must compare the islands belonging to one power with those under the dominion of another. With a view to elicit truth, and to remove as much as possible doubt and prejudice, I have conceived the most simple plan to be, to compare the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico,—the only colonies which Spain now possesses in the western hemisphere,—with the colonies of other nations situate beneath the tropics, enjoying the same advantages of climate, soil, and productions, and labouring under the same disadvantages which I have always considered to be inseparable from negro slavery.

A view of the population of the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, compared with that of the British, French, and Danish West India islands, renders manifest the superior advantages of the colonial laws of Spain over those of every other European nation; and will prove incontestably, that the Spanish laws extended both protection and encouragement in a superior degree to the unfortunate slave and to the free people of colour. The islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico are those in the West Indian archipelago that have least to fear from the emancipation of the slaves. To say that they had nothing to apprehend from remote contingencies, would be venturing too far; but at the present day they are, unquestionably, of all the European colonies in the West Indies, those in

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which the lives and properties of the white inhabitants may be considered most safe; for they are the only colonies in which the interest of the master has been made compatible with the humane treatment of the slave,—where the white man may consequently lay his head on his pillow without apprehension,—and where the whole population are united from a sense of mutual interest, and from a conviction of the common danger. It is only by offering correct statements, and by making exact comparisons, that an accurate judgment can be formed on this important subject.

The population of Puerto Rico, in the year 1778, amounted to 70,278. This will no doubt appear to be a very small number, when compared with the number of 600,000 souls, who, as Father Inigo assures us, were found on the island at the period of its discovery by the immortal Columbus. A calculation of this nature, made nearly three centuries ago, when there was not a correct statistical survey existing in the most civilized countries of Europe, cannot exceed the limits of mere conjecture. Besides, this great navigator only touched at one port on the western coast of the island, and remained there but a few days, which could afford room for but very superficial observation; consequently, all statements of definite numbers, with respect to the population of the island at that remote period, may be considered as being essentially fabulous. I need not here attempt to investigate the causes of the decay and ultimate disappearance of the aboriginal race—a subject which appears to me to be involved in considerable doubt and obscurity, notwithstanding the positive statements of some political and party writers. In what degree they became amalgamated with the conquerors by intermarriages, it is impossible at this day to ascertain. It is, however, certain, that many

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of the white inhabitants of Puerto Rico and Cuba have, strongly marked, both in their features and manners, a tincture of the Indian race.

Although the Spanish authorities of Cuba and Puerto Rico have taken great pains to obtain a correct statistical account of the population these islands contain, yet I am convinced, from the observations I have myself made, and from the information I have been able to acquire, that the population of both islands greatly exceeds the numbers which appear by the official returns made to government. The latest census made of the island of Cuba only gives us for the total population of that colony, in 1828, 311,051 whites, 206,494 free people of colour, and 286,942 slaves; making a total of 704,487. I am convinced that the free coloured and slave population of Cuba, does not this day fall short of half a million. The population of Puerto Rico is not less than 400,000, of whom I calculate that only 45,000 are slaves. The reason why the Spanish government has not yet been able to obtain a strictly correct census of the slave population, is in consequence of the direct contribution (however trifling) which is levied on agricultural property; for it induces the landed proprietors to conceal the real number of their slaves, in order to make their crops appear to have been smaller than they really are. Were the Spanish government to act with the inexorable, and, in my opinion, necessary severity practised in the British colonies, of emancipating every slave not registered by the owner, this abuse would be most effectually corrected, and the exact number of slaves would be ascertained, which must always be a matter of importance to government. Thus we find that the population of Puerto Rico alone is equal to that of the island of Jamaica, and to more than one-

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half of the whole population of the British West Indies; and the population of the two Spanish islands exceeds the aggregate population of all the West India colonies of every other European power. In order to convey to the reader an idea of the extraordinary increase of the population of Cuba and Puerto Rico, I shall present the census of their population for different periods. The census of Puerto Rico embraces a term of fifty-two years; that of Cuba only a term of ten years, from 1817 to 1827, inclusive:—

Census of the Island of Cuba.

	Whites.			Free People of Colour.			Slaves.			Total of Coloured Population	Total Population	Ratio of Increase
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.			
1817	130,519	109,311	239,830	58,885	55,173	114,058	124,324	74,881	199,145	383,203	553,033	
1827	168,653	142,398	311,051	51,962	54,532	106,694	183,290	103,652	286,942	393,436	704,487	27. 3

Statement of the Population of the Island of Puerto Rico from the year 1778 *to* 1830 *inclusive, according to the Official Returns made to the Spanish Government.*

Years.	Whites.	Free People of Colour.		Total free, of Colour.	Slaves.	Total Coloured Population	Total Population of the Island.	Ratio of Increase.
		Mulattoes.	Blacks.					
1778 to 1802	78,281	55,164	16,414	71,578	13,333	84,911	163,192	132 per ct.
1812	85,662	63,983	15,823	79,806	17,536	97,342	183,014	12 do.
1820	102,432	86,269	20,191	106,460	21,730	128,190	230,622	26 do.
1827	150,311	95,430	25,057	120,487	31,874	152,361	302,672	40 do.
1830	162,311	100,430	26,857	127,287	34,240	161,527	323,838	6½ do.

The population of Puerto is not much indebted to immigration for its increase; for, notwithstanding the many advantages offered to the industrious, and the facility and encouragement which the government has invariably given to colonization, yet there are not more than 2833 foreigners naturalized, or residing on the island. From the best information I could obtain, it appears that the emigration from the revolted colonies of the Conti-

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nent did not exceed 7000 persons. Puerto Rico formerly had the reputation of being poor; consequently adventurers could not expect to realise fortunes in a few years, as in Mexico and Peru. Three-fourths of the population are engaged in agricultural pursuits, which are of all other occupations the most conducive to health, to sound moral feeling, and to the increase of the population. Neither has this island groaned, as others have done, beneath the importation of African slaves. There being no great capitalists, there were no speculators in human flesh. Those who were masters of a few slaves took care to preserve them; hence the extraordinary increase of the population.

On carefully examining the foregoing census, from the year 1778 to 1830 inclusive, I trust that it will be admitted that no other European colony, in any quarter of the globe, can prove so much in favour of the government by which it is protected. From the year 1778 to 1830, a period of 52 years, the population increased 253,580 souls; that is, at the rate of 361 per cent., which makes an average increase of $6\frac{9}{10}$ per cent. per annum. From 1778 to 1802, a period of 24 years, the population increased 92,934 individuals, that is, 132 per cent., or $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. From 1802 to 1812, a period of ten years, the population only increased 19,822, or about twelve per cent., which is a fraction less than $1\frac{1}{5}$ per cent. per annum, which is considerably below the increase of any former period. From 1812 to 1820, a period of eight years, the population increased in numbers 47,608, which makes 26 per cent. or $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. per annum. From 1820 to 1830, a period of ten years, the increase was 93,216, which is at the rate of 40 per cent. or 4 per cent. per annum. The white population has increased 59,879 souls, that is to say, $58\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

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during the last ten years, which is something more than 5¼ per cent. per annum. The free mulattoes have increased in the same period, 14,161, or about 16⅓ per cent. in ten years, or 1⅔ per cent. per annum. The slaves have increased 12,510, or 57 per cent. in ten years, which makes about 5¾ per cent. per annum. This would double the population of the island in less than 15 years; that is calculating according to the increase of the population from the year 1778 to 1802 inclusive, a period when there was no immigration of strangers, and scarcely any importation of African slaves. But if we take the period from the year 1820 to 1830, as a term of comparison with respect to the increase of population, it would exceed that calculation; therefore, I believe, there is no country on record in which there has been such an extraordinary increase of population as we find in the island of Puerto Rico,—an increase which has taken place in the regular course of events, without the assistance of immigration; and, thank God, without the importation to any material extent of captive Africans!

The population of Puerto Rico, classed as whites, free people of colour, and slaves, in the five periods I have just cited, bore to each other the following proportions:—

Years.	Whites.	Free People of Colour and Blacks.	Slaves.	
1802	48	43½	8½	per cent.
1812	46⅞	43½	9⅝	
1820	44½	46⅛	9½	
1828	49⅜	39⅝	10⅜	
1830	50⅛	39¼	10⅝	

According to the census made in 1827, which is undoubtedly the minimum of the population, and by adding to it the number of births for the three successive years of 1828, 1829, and 1830, and deducting therefrom

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the number of deaths which occurred during the same period, we come to the following results :—

Years.	Births.	Deaths.
1828	14,337	8285
1829	16,400	8420
1830	15,272	8138
Total	46,009	24,843

which shews, that the increase of population, for the last three years, was 21,166, or 3 per cent. per annum on an average. By adding this increase to 302,672, which Puerto Rico contained in 1827, we find, that in the year 1830, there was, on the lowest possible estimate, a population amounting to 323,838 individuals : therefore, according to the most exact survey made, which calculates the island to contain 330 square leagues, there are 491¾ white inhabitants, 304⅓ free mulattoes, 81⅔ free negroes, and 103¾ slaves, to every square league; and of the aggregate population there are 981⅕ individuals to every square league; while in the island of Cuba there are only 201 inhabitants to every square league.

It is a most pleasing reflection for the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, surrounded as they are on every side by islands thickly inhabited by the African race, that the white inhabitants exceed the free mulattoes by 187 in each square league; the free blacks by 410¼; and the slaves by 388. The white population is thus numerically superior to the combined numbers of free mulattoes, free blacks, and slaves, by 2¾ individuals in every square league; and exceeds them by 784 on a general estimate of the population of the island. According to Sagra, the increase of the population in the island of Cuba, from the year 1791 to 1810, a period of twenty years, was as follows :—The whites increased in numbers 73½ per cent.;

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the free people of colour, 171; and the slaves, 165. The whole population offered in that period an increase of 117 per cent.; but on comparing this with the increase of the population of the island of Puerto Rico, Cuba loses the advantage to which in this respect she may lay claim, most undoubtedly, over the West India colonies of every other European power. The white population of Puerto Rico, from the year 1812 to 1830, a period of eighteen years, has had an augmentation of 189½ per cent.; the free people of colour, 159½; the slaves, 201; and the whole population an increase of 176$\frac{2}{10}$ per cent.; a rate which would double the inhabitants in less than fifteen years. Malthus, in his work on population, states, that inhabitants of a country enjoying the blessings of a good government and plenty of food, may double their numbers in the space of 25 years.

The extraordinary increase of the population of Cuba and Puerto Rico, compared with the decrease of all classes and grades of colour in the British and French West India colonies, requires a separate examination. It would be worthy of philosophers and philanthropists to take the trouble to investigate the causes why the colonies of a nation which has been considered by many writers impolitic and tyrannical in her administrative policy and government, should have advanced so rapidly in agriculture, commerce, and population, while the colonies of those powers which are held up to mankind as the most enlightened in policy, and the most liberal in principle, have decreased in agriculture, the free coloured people been nearly annihilated, and a depressed and scanty population of whites placed in jeopardy by an overwhelming slave population.

In order to convey to the reader a clear idea of the distribution of the different classes of the inhabitants in the

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island of Puerto Rico, I have drawn a line of division from east to west, which is its greatest longitude, dividing it nearly into two equal parts. The line of demarcation extends from the embouchure of the river Mayagues on the western coast, to the embouchure of the river Nayguabo, which falls into the sea at the eastern extremity of the island.

Distribution, by classes, of the population of Puerto Rico, in fifty-seven towns and villages, and on the lands within their respective jurisdictions.

Population of the North Coast, distributed in thirty-two towns and villages.

Whites.	Free Mulattoes.	Free Blacks.	Total Free of colour.	Slaves.	Total of coloured population.	Total population of the north coast.
94,777	46,748	15,307	62,045	15,942	77,987	172,764

Population of the South Coast, distributed in twenty-one towns and villages.

Whites.	Free Mulattoes.	Free Blacks.	Total Free of colour.	Slaves.	Total of coloured population.	Total population of the south coast.
67,534	53,682	11,450	65,132	18,298	83,430	150,964

By this synopsis of the distribution of the population, we find that on the north coast of Puerto Rico, the white inhabitants exceed those of the same class on the southern coast by 27,243. The free people of colour on both coasts are inferior in number to the whites, while those on the south exceed those on the north by 3087. The slaves on the south coast exceed those on the north by 2356; and the whole coloured population of the south coast exceeds that of the north coast by 5443. Thus we find, that even in those parts of the island where the greatest number of sugar estates are established, the slaves are much inferior to the white inhabitants in numerical force. In the island of Cuba, the whites and free people of colour make $\frac{54}{100}$ of the whole population; in the British West Indies, scarcely $\frac{10}{100}$; and in Puerto Rico, $\frac{80}{100}$. There-

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fore I am convinced, that any person who reflects for one moment on this statement of facts, will not be surprised when I aver, that Cuba and Puerto Rico are the colonies which have least danger to apprehend from a servile war, or a war of caste and colour, should such unhappily ever arise in the West Indies.

We now come to this conclusion, a conclusion that cannot be negatived, that the population of the Spanish islands has doubled in less than twenty years, while that of the British and French islands has declined or remains stationary. This latter melancholy fact I shall establish by the clearest proofs in the following pages. According to the evidence I have already adduced in support of my calculations, with respect to the extraordinary increase of the population of the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, it will not, I believe, be hazarding a rash opinion to say, that before the expiration of half a century, unless some extraordinary occurrence should intervene to prevent its progressive prosperity, this latter island may, on a moderate calculation, count a million of inhabitants; a number who, by no great exertion of industry, may be maintained on its fertile soil; for the extent of land actually under cultivation and pasture in 1828, was about 1,437,285 acres, which at present maintains 400,000 persons. The number of acres uncultivated, and under virgin woods, exceeds a million and a half. Besides, the island of Bieques, commonly called Crab island, belonging to Spain, under the command of the captain-general of Puerto Rico, and distant from the north-east coast only three leagues, is one of the most fertile spots in the West Indies. It is ten leagues long and two broad, and would be competent to maintain at least 300,000 inhabitants, if properly cultivated. And it is to be observed, that the lands of Puerto Rico, generally speaking, are not at

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present either well or carefully cultivated; therefore, when brought under proper culture, a greater quantity of produce will be raised on the same tract of land than at present, and the population consequently may be augmented to a greater number than even that which I have stated.

The proportion between the sexes is more equal in Puerto Rico than in Cuba, or in any of the other West India islands. The females in this island exceed in number the males in all classes of the inhabitants, except among the slaves, in which class the males out-number the females by 1036 only.

Proportion between the Sexes in Puerto Rico in 1828.

	Whites.		Free People of Colour.		Slaves.		Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
	77,839	79,742	61,689	65,555	17,650	16,686	157,178	161,983
Rel. prop. per cent.	49⅛	50⅜	48⅛	51½	51⅛	48⅜	49	51

In the island of Cuba, in 1827, there were the following proportions between the sexes. In the white population, the males were 54 per cent., and the females 46. In the free people of colour, the males were 48 per cent. and the females 52: and among the slaves, the males bore the proportion of 64 per cent., and the females 36.

In an island like Puerto Rico, where the population does not undergo continual changes by the flux and reflux of commerce and emigration, the calendar of births and deaths will be found to form a correct standard whereby to judge of its increase or diminution. For, as the state of the weather is ascertained by the rise or fall of the barometer, so may that of the human species in Christian countries, with respect to an increase or diminution of numbers, be accurately known by the parochial registers. It is the curate who signs the passport to the

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grave, and who, on the other hand, ushers the new-born infant from the baptismal font on the living stage of the world. I shall merely offer, in this place, a statement of the number of births, deaths, and marriages, which occurred in Puerto Rico in the whole of the year 1828; for I find on examination, that there has been a very trifling variation during the years 1829 and 1830, and for the five years preceding, excepting in the number of marriages, which were nearly doubled in 1830; this being a clear indication of the increase of moral principle among the free people of colour and slaves.

Births, Deaths, and Marriages, in Puerto Rico during 1828.

BIRTHS.									
Whites.			Free People of Colour.			Slaves.			Total.
Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Births of all Classes
3273	2364	5637	3688	3328	7016	985	800	1785	14,438
DEATHS.									
1839	1383	3222	2054	1749	3803	637	523	1160	8185

MARRIAGES.				
Whites.	Free People of Colour.	Slaves.	Total.	
734	489	33	1256	

This statement, copied exactly from the monthly official returns made to the captain-general by the magistrates of every town and village, is the most correct that can be imagined; for each curate in his respective parish is obliged to keep a regular registry of the number of births, deaths, and marriages, which take place within his jurisdiction. By comparing the number of births of the different classes, the following proportions will be found to exist between them:—

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Born.		Males.	Females.	
Total Whites . . .	3¾	4¼	3	
Free People of colour	5¾	6	5	per
Slaves	5¾	5½	5	cent.
Total Population . .	4¾			

From this statement it appears that the white inhabitants, with all the advantages of superior civilization, and though enjoying greater comforts, are less prolific than the people of colour and slaves, who, destined to labour in the field, are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of the seasons, and are generally obliged to subsist on more humble fare. The number of white persons born in the island of Puerto Rico is, on an average of five years, equal in proportion to those born in the island of Cuba, with a reference to the respective populations of the islands; but the proportion of free people of colour and slaves born annually in Puerto Rico, on a per centage, exceeds that of the same class born in Cuba, by rather more than 1 per cent. in each class. The proportion of males born in every class is greater than that of females, which is generally the case in every country on the face of the globe.

On a calculation of the whole population of Puerto Rico, it appears, that among the whites, there is one born for every 26½ individuals; among the free people of colour, 1 for every 17⅐; and among the slaves, 1 for every 17¾. In the island of Cuba, there is 1 born for every 25 whites; 1 for every 22 of the free people of colour; and 1 for every 22 slaves; which proves that the proportion of whites born in Cuba exceeds that of those born in Puerto Rico; but the proportion of free people of colour and slaves born in the latter colony, considerably exceeds the relative proportion in the former.

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Deaths and Births in Puerto Rico in 1828.

DEATHS.	Population.	BIRTHS.	Population.
Whites, $2\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. on	150,311	Whites, $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. on	150,311
Free coloured, $3\frac{1}{8}$ do. on	120,487	Free coloured, $5\frac{7}{8}$ do. on	120,487
Slaves, $3\frac{5}{8}$ do. on	31,874	Slaves, $5\frac{5}{8}$ do. on	31,874

Proportion between the Sexes.

DEATHS.		Population.	BIRTHS.		Population.
Whites	Males, $2\frac{3}{8}$ per cent on Females, $1\frac{5}{8}$ do	77,839 79,742	Whites	Males, $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on Females, 3 do	77,839 79,742
Free people of colour.	Males, $3\frac{3}{8}$ do Females, $2\frac{5}{8}$ do	61,689 65,555	Free people of colour.	Males, 6 do Females, $5\frac{1}{8}$ do	61,689 65,555
Slaves	Males, $3\frac{7}{8}$ do Females, $3\frac{1}{8}$ do	17,650 16,686	Slaves	Males, $5\frac{1}{2}$ do Females, $4\frac{7}{8}$ do	17,650 16,686

Balance in favour of the Population.

Among the Whites	$1\frac{5}{8}$ per cent.
Free people of colour	$2\frac{3}{4}$ do.
Slaves	2 do.

Persons of observant habits, who may have resided for any length of time in the unhealthy islands of Jamaica, Martinique, St. Lucia, and many others of the West India colonies, which are very justly denominated the graves of the Europeans who go thither, cannot fail to have observed the dreadful mortality that prevails at certain seasons among every class of their population, whether they be whites, free people of colour, or slaves. The superior health enjoyed by the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, on an average of several years, is scarcely credible when we consider that it is situate between the tropics. The average number of deaths, for several years, has been about $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum.

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Average number of Deaths in the whole population, 2¾ per cent.

	Males.	Females.	
Whites . . 2⅛	. . . 2⅓	. . . 1⅞	}
Free coloured 3 1/10	. . . 3	. . . 2⅝	} per cent. per annum.
Slaves . . 3¾	. . . 3½	. . . 3¼	}

This gives 1 death for every 40½ of the white population;
1 death for every 31¾ of the coloured ditto;
1 death for every 27 of the slave ditto;
and one death for every thirty-seven individuals of the whole population; which proves Puerto Rico to be nearly as healthy as France, where it is calculated that there is one death in 39⅓ of the whole population; and that it is much healthier than the department of Finisterre, which loses one for every thirty of its inhabitants.

It cannot be thought surprising, that the number of deaths among the slaves should be greater in proportion than among the other classes, if we take into consideration the fact, that upwards of forty sugar estates have been established within the last four years, and consequently, that the slaves employed in their cultivation had to endure the privations and to encounter the dangers incident to the laborious work of cutting down timber, draining of land, and exposure to the weather,—besides the chance of falling victims to the mortal diseases engendered by the noxious exhalations which arise from virgin land, newly cleared of wood, teeming with decomposed vegetable matter, and exposed to the scorching rays of a tropical sun. But we should not be surprised at the mortality of the slaves in the West Indies being greater than among the other classes of the population, for if we were only to turn our eyes towards the labouring classes in Europe, who are employed in cutting canals, draining swamps, or exploring mines; as great, or perhaps a greater proportional mortality prevails among them than even on a plantation newly cleared of wood in the

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West Indies. The labourers of Cornwall, in England, employed in the mines, it is observed, seldom attain the age of fifty years,—although England is undoubtedly the healthiest country in Europe, for it is calculated that the mortality does not exceed one in fifty-seven of the gross population. There are, however, many examples of slaves living to the advanced age of 90 and 100 years, in Puerto Rico. It is with sincere pleasure that I have observed, on a calculation of a series of years, that the free people of colour, and slaves, whose numbers rapidly decrease in the British and French colonies, increase in Puerto Rico, by the regular process of nature, and not by that horrid and deplorable traffic—the African trade.

The foregoing calculations prove that the slaves in Puerto Rico have increased two per cent. annually, on a general average, without including a few who may have been imported from the foreign colonies. In the British islands, I understand, that on a general average, the slaves decrease in numbers at least six per cent. annually, and in the French colonies, eight and ten per cent. The free people of colour in this island increase nearly in the same ratio as the slaves, while the free black and coloured population in some of the other European colonies, present a fearful diminution in their numbers. For example, in the year 1802, there were in the French island of Guadaloupe, 14,610 free people of colour, and in 1822, there were only 8604 of the same class, which leaves a deficit of 6006. This immense decrease of a class of men, who, considered physically, should have increased in numbers more rapidly than the slaves or whites, is partly owing to causes which I shall presently endeavour to explain. In 1802, the slave population of Guadaloupe amounted to 87,156, and in the year 1822, it only numbered 87,998,—which gives an increase of exactly 842 in the long space of

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twenty years! But when we reflect on the fact, that during the above-mentioned period an immense number of slaves were imported from Africa, we are naturally led to inquire what has become of them? and why have not the slaves multiplied by the regular course of nature in the French colonies, as we have observed to be the case in the colonies of Spain? I have asked this question, and I have consulted a recent voluminous publication on the French colonies, (written by a French officer of rank,) on this subject, and was exceedingly surprised and mortified to find the acknowledgment that there was no registry kept, either by the curates, or by the civil authorities, of the deaths and births of the slaves. No Christian ceremony was ever performed over these poor, wretched captives, either on their coming into, or going out of the world; the water of baptism was denied them, and their understandings were kept darkened, by the toleration of the funeral rites in the forms of African superstition being performed over them by their countrymen,—their companions in bondage. It was the custom to bury them at midnight, and the greatest excesses were committed by those that attended. This system of burial for the slaves was also followed, about twenty years ago, in the British islands; but, till very lately, this custom was observed in all the French colonies. Since the first importation of slaves into the Spanish transatlantic dominions, the most scrupulous attention has been paid to the registry of the deaths and births that occurred among the slaves. Every slave was baptized the very moment he landed on Spanish ground. All owners of slaves are obliged, under severe penalties, to render an immediate and correct statement of the death of every slave that may take place on their respective estates, the disease by which it was caused, and a certificate signed by the physician who attended

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during their illness, in order that the authorities might be able to ascertain the fact, whether the deaths were caused by neglect, or ill-treatment, or whether they took place in the regular course of nature.

Sagra, in his work on the island of Cuba, presents the following data with respect to the number of births, deaths, and marriages, which occurred there during the year 1827 :—

Births, Marriages, and Deaths, in the Island of Cuba in 1827.

Whites.			Free people of Colour.			Slaves.		
Births.	Marriages.	Deaths.	Births.	Marriages.	Deaths.	Births.	Marriages.	Deaths.
12,928	1868	6632	4826	385	2952	12,729	1381	7081

Thus it appears, that in the island of Cuba also, the proportion of children born is decidedly in favour of the coloured population; for if the census be exact, there is 1 born for every 25 individuals of the white population, 1 for every 22 individuals of the free coloured, and 1 for every 22 in the slave. The deaths which occurred among the different classes were in the following proportions :—

White population, 2·1 per cent.
Free coloured do. 2·7 do.
Slave do. 2·4 do.

But it must be recollected, that in the island of Cuba the population undergoes continual changes, in consequence of the immense number of foreigners of all nations carried thither on commercial speculations, as well as by the large importation of African slaves. The calculations of births and deaths must therefore be subject to many fluctuations, and, consequently, it would be very difficult to make an accurate calculation on this subject. It is a curious fact observable in Cuba, as well as in all the West India islands, that the number of births among the

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free people of colour exceeds the number of deaths which take place in the same class by but a small proportion.

As the number of births and deaths which take place annually in an island circumstanced in the same manner as Puerto Rico, may be considered a correct standard whereby to judge of the increase or diminution of its population, so the number of marriages may be considered a fair criterion by which to form an opinion with respect to the extent of moral feeling among the free people of colour and slaves. No island in the West Indies,—I do not go too far, perhaps, when I assert, that no European colony on the face of the globe,—presents a more striking example of this truth than the Spanish colonies, where marriage has not been at any period, nor is it at present, confined exclusively to the white population, as was formerly the case in the British and French colonies. The wish to contract lawful union by marriage, pervades all classes of society; this privilege is sanctioned and enjoined by the law; and even the poor degraded slaves, under the Spanish colonial administration, may enjoy the sweet endearments of conjugal affection, the solace of a home and of a family. In their old age, surrounded by an affectionate offspring, (for no people on the face of the earth make better parents, kinder husbands, or more dutiful children than the Africans) they descend to the grave, without casting a look of regret back to the country in which they were born; for a home, a country, and a family, they find in the Spanish colonies, where their minds, benighted by pagan superstition, are taught that the slaves too have a God! What a comparison could I draw between this picture of the Spanish slave and an affecting scene which I witnessed in the island of Martinique. I was walking one evening, just as the sun was about dipping into the ocean, on the sea shore, near

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Fort Royal. On a rock I saw an old negro, with his woolly hair as white as snow, viewing attentively the setting sun. It had scarcely set, when he threw himself on the ground, and began to lament aloud in his own tongue, apparently in the agony of excessive grief. I went up to him, and asked what had happened. He looked at me with sullen suspicion, and then said, "Ah! they are gone for ever. I shall never see them more; it is now twelve moons since a white man bought my wife and four children; they were dragged from me; they were carried beyond the sea; they see the sun as it sets; they too weep; but I shall never see them more till I die and they die, when we will meet in our own country again!" Such has been the fate of thousands and tens of thousands of slaves in the colonies of France and England, who, separated from their families by the most cruel exertion of human tyranny, have not had the consolations of religion to smooth their transition from slavery to the grave—no kindred hand to plant a flower on their tomb—no friendly tear to bedew the earth which covered their mortal remains!

The necessaries and many of the comforts of life enjoyed by the great majority of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, the happy retirement of a country life, an abundance of food, the absence of populous cities, and of the vices and pleasures with which they abound, induce to early marriages. It would, at this moment, be very difficult to point out a future period when the want of subsistence, and consequently the dread of marrying from an apprehension of entailing misery and want on a wretched progeny, may operate as positive checks to the increase of the population of this island. A perfect stranger, dropped as it were from the clouds, naked, without any other auxiliaries than health and strength, might marry the next day after his descent, and maintain a family without

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undergoing more hardships or suffering more privations than generally fall to the lot of a labourer in the ordinary process of cultivating the land; and their offspring might be brought up in a perfect state of nudity, (as is the case with thousands of children in the West Indies,) without their experiencing the least inconvenience to their health, or any diminution of bodily comfort. The plantain tree, cultivated at little expense and with scarcely any labour, affords a most wholesome and nutritious food; the chill blast of a northern winter is never felt in these regions; the luxuries, the indispensable preparations necessary to meet the changes of the seasons, are unnecessary and unknown. The greatest luxury of the negro is to repose at noon-day under the shade of the tamarind tree: reckless of the cares of life, thoughtless of the lively, exhilarating scenes of this brilliant climate—he inhales the refreshing easterly breeze, which clears the tropical atmosphere of noxious particles, and renders these regions salubrious and habitable. In such a climate, with all the advantages of the most prolific vegetation, it would argue a great degree of moral debasement were not marriages frequent among all classes of the inhabitants. In the year 1828, there were 1256 marriages solemnized in Puerto Rico, of which 734 were among the white, 489 among the free coloured, and 33 among the slave population. In 1830, there were 2152 marriages solemnized in the island, of which 150 were of slaves. This last calculation of 2152 marriages in one year, gives one marriage for every 150 individuals of the population of the island; while in Cuba in the same year there was only one marriage for every 194 individuals of the population; that is, there were only 3684 marriages solemnized, of which 385 were of free people of colour, and 1381 of slaves. It is therefore evident, that the free coloured and

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slave, as well as the white population in the Spanish colonies, have recourse to a ceremony which forms one of the most important precepts of the Christian religion; and which, if properly understood, and prudently observed, most essentially contributes to preserve that order and decorum in society which must be perverted or destroyed by the scandalous toleration of the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes. I will save the reader a blush, by suppressing the details of the dreadful scenes of immorality which I have witnessed in other colonies,—where there are men who make a trade of keeping a number of negresses for the sole purpose of breeding, and where these monsters then sell their own offspring bred in their black harems!

The French West India islands offer a striking contrast, on the head of marriages, with the Spanish colonies, and evince the moral depravity which has been so long countenanced among the free blacks, mulattoes, and slaves, in the French colonies,—and I am constrained also to add, in the British. Such a toleration of immorality certainly reflects little honour on the laws and institutions of civilized nations. It is a very rare occurrence that free people of colour marry in the French colonies, and slaves were not permitted to marry under any circumstances. In the whole period from 1820 to 1825, not a single marriage was solemnized between free people of colour, in the islands of Martinique or Guadaloupe; nor does the author whom I cite, (a Frenchman,) mention any marriage having taken place among them at any former period. Twelve years ago, the marriage rite was altogether unknown among the slaves, even in the British colonies; and among the free negroes and mulattoes it was of very rare occurrence indeed. Both in the French and British colonies, the free mulatto girls

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who have any pretensions to beauty, are reserved to be the concubines of the European merchants and planters; and the mothers of these unfortunate girls make regular agreements and stipulations for the sale of their persons, which excludes them for ever from holding any respectable rank in society. Thus they become degraded in the estimation of the public; and their progeny, brought up with this example of vice and prostitution before their eyes, imitate it. This system of profligacy and the consequent degradation of the free mulattoes in a moral sense, is the principal cause that has, in my opinion, retarded the increase of this part of the population in the British and French colonies. It is only on this principle that I can account for the extraordinary disproportion of numbers which exists between that class and the whites and slaves in the above-mentioned colonies. The British island of Trinidad,* with a population of 64,400, has only 16,000 free people of colour. The island of Barbadoes, with a population of 80,000, has only 5000 free people of colour. Jamaica, with a population of 402,000, counts only 35,000 free people of colour. And the whole British West Indies, consisting of fifteen islands, containing a population of 760,000 souls, have only 80,121 free people of colour,—making 47,167 individuals of that class less than in the island of Puerto Rico alone, which had in 1830, 127,287,—while Cuba, in 1827, had 106,494 free people of colour; the two Spanish islands possessing a free coloured population of 233,781 persons. The French colonies exhibit a scene still more discouraging to the investigation of the philanthropist. The islands of Martinique,

* The island of Trinidad has a greater proportion of free blacks and free mulattoes, in consequence of the Spanish laws having been in force before it came under the British government, than any other British or French colony.

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Guadaloupe, and Marigalante, with a population that exceeds 200,000, have not 20,000 free people of colour. Guadaloupe, with a population of 108,562, counts only 8604 free people of colour. The Danish islands are equally conspicuous for the small number of free people of colour. Santa Cruz, with a population of 28,839, counts only 1164 free people of colour, and St. Thomas bears nearly the same proportion. In vain have I endeavoured to account for this great disproportion in the free coloured population of all the European colonies, excepting in those of Spain; and the least unfavourable construction I can put upon it, is that the Spanish laws breathe a spirit of humanity towards the unfortunate slaves, and afford them greater facilities for obtaining their freedom. Besides, the punishment and infamy attendant on public concubinage in the Spanish dominions, make the coloured females to look up to the marriage ceremony as their birthright, and to reject the offers of the libertine. I do not mean to assert by this reasoning that women of an abandoned character are not to be found in the Spanish islands; there, as well as in every other country, the frailties incident to human nature exist; but I have endeavoured to establish the fact, by unquestionable evidence, that marriage among the free people of colour and slaves is more general in the Spanish colonies, and scandalous concubinage less frequent, than in the colonies of any other European power. We may, therefore, conclude, that there is more morality among the lower classes in the former than in the latter.

On comparing the white population of the English and French West Indies with the same class in the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, we find a similar disproportion of numbers to that which I have already observed to exist in the free people of colour. The

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shameless prostitution of the free mulatto women must have had a powerful influence in retarding the increase of the white population; and the decrease continues to such a degree that the total disappearance of that colour may be anticipated in the West India islands, if such highly immoral practices are persevered in. The white ladies in the British and French islands, educated generally in Europe, brought up with high notions of honour, and strict principles of virtue, scorn to debase themselves by becoming the mistresses of European merchants and planters. These men, looking on the colonies merely as a place for quickly realizing a fortune, seldom permanently establish themselves in them, and rarely marry during their abode, but take mulatto girls as mistresses. Thus the white ladies, educated in the schools of Europe and highly accomplished, are destined to languish out a life of celibacy. The effects of this depraved and anti-social system may be plainly traced in the following enumeration of the white population of the colonies of England, France, and Denmark.

WHITE POPULATION.

BRITISH WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

Trinidad - - - -	4000
St. Lucia - - - -	972
Barbadoes - - - -	14,959
Grenada - - - -	300
Tobago - - - -	322
Jamaica and the Bahamas -	30,000
Dominica - - - -	840
Montserrat - - - -	350
St. Vincent's - - - -	1300
St. Kitt's - - - -	1412
Tortola - - - -	477
Antigua - - - -	1980
Total - -	56,912

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Thus giving 56,912 whites in a population of 760,000 souls: which amounts only to one-third of the white population of the island of Puerto Rico, and to one-eighth of the white inhabitants of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

FRENCH ISLANDS.	
Martinique	11,000
Guadaloupe	12,802
Marigalante	150
St. Martin's	230
Total	24,182

DANISH ISLANDS.	
St. Thomas	1500
Santa Cruz	1164
St. John	190
Total	2854

Thus we find that the white population of Cuba and Puerto Rico, which is 473,362, is nearly seven times greater than the aggregate population of the West India colonies of Great Britain, France, and Denmark. The importance of this synopsis of the white population of the West Indies requires no comment at this moment, when the government of Great Britain is about to take serious measures for the total abolition of slavery in her colonies.

I have thus presented a fair and unvarnished statement of facts,—facts that may be comprehended by the meanest capacity. I now leave it to those writers who have laboured so long and so vainly to throw discredit on the government of Spain with respect to her colonial laws and administration, to draw a just inference from this comparison of the actual population of the English, French, and Danish islands, with those of Spain—in fair competition, labouring under the same disadvantages of negro slavery, enjoying the same climate and soil, and yielding the same productions. In the investigation of truth, national vanity and national prejudice should be laid aside; and when reflecting men turn their thoughts to this subject, they will find how the present state of the Spanish colonies has been the subject of misrepresentation.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Comparative View of the Condition of the Slaves in the Colonies of Spain, and in those of other European Powers—Absurd and untenable Principles on which Negro Slavery has been defended by its Advocates—Capacity and good Qualities of the Negro Race—Early Attention of Spanish Legislation to the Good Treatment and Improvement of the Slaves—Facility of acquiring Property, of enjoying the legal Privileges of Marriage, and of obtaining Enfranchisement in the Spanish Colonies, contrasted with the State of Things in the French, English, Dutch, and Danish Colonies—Comparison of the old Slave Laws of the French and British Colonies with those of Spain—Barbarity of the existing French Colonial Laws—Attachment of the Spanish Mulattoes to the Whites—No Instance of Slave Insurrection in the Spanish Colonies—Good Conduct and Fidelity of the Spanish Slaves in the Revolutions of South America and Hayti—View of the beneficent Provisions of the Spanish Slave Code—Dwellings and Provision Grounds of the Slaves in Puerto Rico—Their daily Labours—Medical Attendance—Their Condition compared with that of the Peasantry of Europe—Increase of the Slave Population in Puerto Rico—Violent Prejudices of Colour, and Treatment of the free Mulattoes in the United States.

HAVING in the preceding chapter offered an unprejudiced view of the condition of the different classes of population in Puerto Rico and Cuba, accompanied by the

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most exact calculations which I have found it practicable to obtain with respect to the relative proportions of the different classes existing at the present moment in the colonies of the several European powers in the West Indies,—I shall now proceed to examine the treatment which the slaves experience under the influence of the Spanish laws. I am persuaded that on a close inspection of the condition of the slaves in the Spanish colonies, and the laws by which they have been specially protected, it will be found, that almost every preparatory measure which a wise legislature could invent or foresee, in order to render the slaves fit for enjoying the benefits of civil liberty, has been enacted by the councils of Spain, and carried into operation in her colonies. The practical examples which I feel it necessary to introduce have come under my own personal view; and that no doubt may exist on a subject of such deep interest, I deem it also expedient to compare some of the ancient Spanish laws for the government of the slaves, with those which were in force at a former day in the colonies of France and England.

The present age is too enlightened to allow the prejudices of party opinion to conceal or to weaken the evidence of well-established facts; and I shall not find it very difficult to prove that while the African slaves were sunk in the most profound depths of pagan ignorance and superstition in the colonies both of France and England, —while the water of baptism was there denied them, and they were excluded from the lights of that religion which alone could afford them comfort even in slavery, they were freely admitted to that sacred rite, and to all the privileges of Christianity, in the Spanish colonies. Taking a retrospect of the earliest period of the history of slavery, when not a feeling of domestic happiness illumined the

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slave's dark and cruel destiny—even many years before the British parliament had yet resounded with cries of indignation at the recital of the monstrous cruelties perpetrated by the slave merchants and by planters in the colonies—many years before the sufferings which the wretched slaves endured on ship-board, or the wiles, the stratagems, and the violence employed to drag them from their native land into bondage, were brought to light—long before this nefarious and inhuman traffic had been denounced to the world, or its abolition decreed by the great rival nations—the spiritual and temporal happiness of the slaves was cared for, and the means of obtaining their freedom were pointed out and fully provided for, by the laws of Spain.

Some of those who have most strenuously maintained the colonial controversy against the arguments of the abolitionists, have endeavoured to support the necessity and the utility of slavery on principles the most absurd and untenable. They maintain that slavery is absolutely necessary for the cultivation of the colonies—that free labour would be ruinous—that the negroes are not fitted by nature for the full use of the intellectual faculties—that they are only proper objects for the yoke of eternal bondage. With equal warmth has it been asserted, that the negroes are not endowed with any of the better feelings of our nature, and every vice has been unqualifiedly ascribed to them. Let it be remembered, however, that in these statements the picture of the slave has been drawn by the persons who oppress him—by those who have an interest in discouraging all who would wish to procure his freedom. But it is an undeniable fact, that the Africans, even in slavery, have evinced on many occasions feelings which would do honour to the most civilized beings. In the British service, during the late

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war, they proved themselves to be brave soldiers and faithful subjects; and that they are susceptible of mental improvement may be seen by the precision with which the West India regiments manœuvre, and by the facility with which they learn to read and write when an opportunity is afforded them. They are faithful to their friends; they make affectionate husbands and fathers, faithful wives, and dutiful children. Those vices and defects which cannot fail to be engendered in a human being degraded by the state of slavery, are no doubt to be found among them; but prejudice has much exaggerated the picture of their vices, and the violence of party spirit and self-interest has heightened the colouring.

It is not my intention to enter into a discussion of the merits or demerits of an odious subject—the origin of negro slavery. The fact is that slavery does exist; that it bears heavily and unjustly on a large portion of our fellow men; and therefore, the wish of every humane heart should beat in unison, and every mind be employed in finding out the best means of accomplishing generally this great object, the emancipation of the slaves. In the furtherance of this view, I entertain a hope that it will be gratifying to those who wish further information on this interesting subject, to trace the steps which have been taken in the Spanish colonies in order to prepare the slaves for their final emancipation, by facilitating the means of obtaining their freedom; by instructing them in the duties of religion; and, finally, by supplying the want of slaves by the substitution of free labour.

The slaves in the Spanish colonies have always enjoyed great comfort and happiness, as compared with their condition in the colonies of other nations. They were protected, even two centuries ago, by the same wise and beneficent laws which have so eminently

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distinguished the colonial administration of Spain; and at the present day they enjoy, in some respects, greater comforts than many of the peasantry of Europe. But notwithstanding every mitigation and amelioration, slavery, in every form and shape, is an evil of great magnitude. For, however deplorable may be the condition of some of the Africans in their native land, and whatever may be the privileges enjoyed in a mitigated state of bondage, slavery, with its concomitant and inseparable evils, cannot fail to work the debasement of the human mind, and the degradation of human nature.

In the Spanish colonies, however, by good conduct and industry, the slaves may count on the certainty of obtaining their freedom in a very few years, and becoming, by good conduct, useful members of society. It is a very common thing for slaves in the Spanish colonies to accumulate property from their savings, and to enfranchise themselves and their children. When the captain-general visited every part of Puerto Rico, in the latter end of last year (1832), to hear the complaints of the inhabitants, and to inspect the administration of justice, an old negro, in a distant part of the country, presented himself to his excellency, making a complaint that a person had purchased from him three or four head of cattle for which he could not obtain payment. The captain-general, on inquiring into the truth of the complaint, found it to be just, and ordered immediate payment to be made to the slave. I asked the old man how many years he had been in the island, and if he had any more cattle. He answered that he had several cows which he had purchased with the savings of his industry, and which he reserved in order to manumit his two children; and that he had been sold only twelve years ago by a gentleman from Barbadoes. He added, that

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he had already purchased the freedom of his wife and one son.

Although the laws of none of the European colonies recognise the property held by slaves, yet in the Spanish colonies it is not only tolerated, but, I may say, has become a law by custom. I have known many slaves who possessed slaves, houses, and property in land. There is at this moment a slave in the Havannah, who is supposed to possess property to the amount of 100,000 dollars, and yet he will not enfranchise himself. I have known many slaves in Puerto Rico who have money to purchase their freedom, but prefer remaining slaves. I have known even offers of freedom to be refused by several of them. In the French colonies, on the contrary, a negro slave cannot possess property of his own; and in the English islands, although he may have money to purchase his freedom, the master may refuse his consent to it, if he thinks proper, or demand any sum his avarice or caprice may suggest. A French colonial law of March, 1685 (article 28), runs thus:—"We hereby declare, that every thing possessed by a slave belongs to his master; and all he may acquire by industry, or through the liberality of others, belongs to his master. The children of slaves, their fathers, mothers, relatives, or others, can make no claim in consequence of succession, by dispositions executed while alive or after death; which dispositions or wills we hereby declare null and void, as well as all promises and obligations which they might have executed, as if made by persons incapable of disposing of or contracting for what belongs to another." The slaves in the French colonies, at no period of their history, have had any stimulus to industry or good conduct from the hopes of one day purchasing their freedom.

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The bitterness of slavery is very much mitigated by the humanity of the Spanish laws. The slave when maltreated by one master, has a right, if he pleases, to seek another. It is not discretionary with the owner to demand any price he pleases for the slave so treated,—it is regulated by law, and is fixed at the minimum of his real value. His age and infirmities are taken into consideration, and the maximum of the value of a slave perfectly healthy, robust, and young, is fixed by law in such cases, at 300 dollars. No law or regulation of this kind exists in any of the English, French, or Danish islands. According to the Spanish laws, a slave may marry according to his inclination. In the Dutch colonies, the curate who should officiate at the marriage of a slave, would be fined 500 dollars, and be deprived of his curacy; and in the English and French colonies, a few years ago, the marriage ceremony was altogether unknown amongst the slaves. Freedom cannot be denied in the Spanish colonies to the slave who produces the sum stipulated by law, whether acquired by donation or by his own industry: and he may purchase either his own freedom, or that of his wife and children. In no part of the world, where slavery exists, is the manumission of slaves so frequent as in the Spanish dominions: the proof of this assertion is, that there are more free people of colour in Puerto Rico alone, than in the whole of the French and English islands put together; although, in the latter, there are more than twenty times the number of slaves contained in the former island. The Spanish legislation from the remotest period favoured the liberty of the slave in a most extraordinary manner. There is also a religious feeling amongst the Spaniards which does them infinite honour, and which induces many masters in their wills to manumit their slaves, as the reward of faithful

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services. This is a circumstance of frequent occurrence, and it acts as a powerful stimulus to good conduct on the part of the slaves. The French colonial laws, again, throw every obstacle in the way to prevent the liberty of the slave. A French colonial law of the 10th June, 1705, says,—"All slaves, free negroes, their children and descendants, are in future incapable of receiving from a white person any donation while living, *in articulo mortis*, or otherwise, under any denomination or pretext; and such donations or legacies are hereby declared null and void, and shall be applied to the use of the nearest hospital." In the Spanish colonies a slave may receive a donation from a white person, or a free person of colour; and although the slave by law is considered as a minor, and consequently not capable of legally possessing property, except by toleration and custom, yet if the master receives the donation on the part of the slave, the amount is deducted out of his value, the day he is sold to another master, or has sufficient money to purchase his own freedom.*

The humane and praiseworthy custom among the Spaniards, of treating the numerous slaves they employ in

* In the British West Indies there was a law which existed until very lately,* by which a black person appearing in any one of these colonies might be immediately imprisoned, and within a limited time exposed to public sale; unless he was able to substantiate his freedom,—a condition hardly to be complied with in any case in which the unfortunate captive was born of free parents in any remote settlement, or even in Great Britain, and which it would be perfectly impossible for any native of the Spanish or Portuguese colonies to perform. In the Spanish colonies, to make a man a slave, it would be necessary to prove the fact that he was a slave, and not the unfortunate man to prove the contrary.

By the laws of Jamaica every free person of colour was exposed to the alternative of providing one or more white men for the militia service, in proportion to the number of slaves which he might possess, or of paying to the public treasury a

* Both the law and practice were in existence until the Act for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies came into force on the 1st of August, 1834.—EDITOR.

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domestic service, with the same kindness and familiarity as if they were their own children, accounts for the reciprocal attachment that is generally observed between the master and the slave in the Spanish colonies. What a contrast between the humane and conciliating spirit of the most ancient Spanish laws relative to slavery, and the barbarous regulations which we find to have existed in some of the ancient provincial laws of the British colonies! Although these terrible laws are now mitigated by the English, they remain in full force and rigour in the French Antilles. The slave laws of Barbadoes, established in 1668, and those of Bermudas, in 1730, say,—"That a master who kills his slave through excessive punishment cannot be prosecuted; and that he who kills him maliciously shall pay ten pounds sterling to the king's treasury;" thus putting a price on human life! A law of the island of St. Christopher's of the 11th March, 1784, runs,—"Whoever shall mutilate his slave by cutting off a limb, putting out an eye, &c., shall be fined £500 sterling, and be condemned to six months' imprisonment." These laws, so degrading to human nature, and so abhorrent to humanity, I am happy to say have been long since abolished, and more humane laws established in their place. I merely cite these examples to show the differ-

very heavy annual fine for non-compliance with that obligation. This law in its effect necessarily operated as a partial and severe tax upon that class of society to which it is referred. Another of the acts of that island imposed an absolute restraint upon devises of land, or bequests of personal property, to free men of colour, whatever might be the opulence of their parents, whenever these testamentary gifts exceeded a certain small and defined amount. The free people of colour laboured besides till lately under many other disabilities in the English colonies. They could hold no situation, civil or military, under government, and they held no rank in society. In the Spanish colonies, people of colour enjoyed all the rights of the whites with respect to possessing property, and holding employments civil and military; in fact, they possessed all the immunities and advantages of the white population, with very few exceptions.

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ence that existed between them and the ancient Spanish code, which breathes mildness and humanity. It affords protection to the slave, and infuses the balm of hope and consolation into his bosom.

The French colonial laws respecting slaves are still barbarous in the extreme. It causes surprise and horror when we read of the cruelty and injustice of the Turkish laws, which condemn a whole family to death or banishment for a fault committed by one individual of it; but that a civilized European nation should promulgate and put in force such laws, requires evidence of the fact to gain belief. That evidence is to be found in the code of Martinique, republished for the government of the slaves of that colony so late as 1807. The law to which I allude bears the date of 10th June, 1705, and is in substance as follows: "His Majesty has ordained and ordains that the free negroes who shall hide in their houses runaway slaves, receive what they may steal, or participate therein, shall be deprived of their liberty, and sold with their families, and the money shall be given to the commissary of marine." Another law, dated 1st March, 1765, says, "Free people of colour convicted of having given an asylum to runaway negroes, shall be deprived of their liberty, and sold for the benefit of the king, the third of the value to be given to the informer." This is a cruel law, which punishes an innocent child for the crimes of a father. Besides, how many wicked persons may be found ready to implicate an ignorant free negro, and then become informers for the sake of the reward. But even these laws are the essence of humanity compared with others that are to be found in that code, and which have been carried into effect so late as 1815. Who will not be struck with horror when I assert, from undoubted authority, that in the year 1815, six wretched

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young negroes were hamstrung in the island of Martinique, merely from its being suspected that they intended to run away! I should have felt much difficulty in giving credit to this cruel fact, did it not come from the respectable pen of the celebrated Baron Humboldt. In perusing the code of Martinique I found the law, which, to the disgrace of humanity, was put in force. This sanguinary law bears the date of March, 1685, (article 38,) and says, "The slave who shall have run away for a whole month, counting from the day on which the master shall have informed the magistrate thereof, shall have his ears cut off, and be marked on one shoulder with a fleur-de-lis. If he should run away a second time for another month, he shall be hamstrung, and marked with another fleur-de-lis on the other shoulder; and if he should run away a third time, he shall suffer death." Laws of such a nature, and facts so incompatible with the conduct that one would expect from polished and civilized nations, should never have been recorded by my pen, were I not disgusted to hear the continual clamours against the Spanish colonies, by individuals who, it would appear, have never taken the trouble to investigate the state of the slave population in them. They have not compared impartially, in all its bearings, their condition, with the manner in which slaves are treated in the colonies of other powers. They have, without reflection, hazarded erroneous opinions, regardless alike of fact and experience.

The mulattoes in the Spanish colonies have a great antipathy to the slaves; and, constantly wishing to rise in the scale of society, adhere firmly to the whites, with whom they will always unite for common defence against the blacks. From the view of physical force which I have already presented to the reader, we must infer, that even were there a disposition to revolt on the part

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of the slaves in the Spanish islands, they could offer no effectual resistance. For besides that the balance of physical strength is in favour of the whites, there is a disciplined body of regular forces, and of white militia, well organized and armed, amounting to 12,000 effective men, without counting the yeomanry and volunteers, regularly formed into corps, but without arms, which exceed, according to the official returns, 50,000 men.

But I am convinced, that even were there not a soldier in the island of Puerto Rico, there would be nothing to be apprehended from the slaves. Never has an example occurred in any of the Spanish colonies, while under the royal dominion, of the negroes having formed in a body for the purpose of revolt. On the contrary, they have invariably adhered to the government in the hour of danger. Treated by their masters with kindness, more like children than slaves, they form an attachment which lasts as long as life. Almost in every Spanish family possessed of slaves, are to be found a number of old men and women, who had been once slaves, living on the bounty of their ancient masters, looking on themselves as a part of the family, and taking a deep interest in its welfare. When I visited the Dutch and French colonies, a few years ago, a slave was a slave in all the force of the word. Treated with harshness, he had no domestic comforts, he could look forward with no hope. Slavery, an uninterrupted prospect of toil, like an immense and boundless desert, presented itself to his view at the dawning of each morning, and at night, after a day of sorrow, he laid himself down without any one to sympathize in his fate; a solitary and wretched being, he viewed his master as an inexorable tyrant, and the slave-driver as a barbarous executioner. He seemed to hate the colour by which he was oppressed, and to

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meditate vengeance in the dark recesses of a broken heart. Hence the continual attempts at revolt in the English and French islands. We are continually shocked (but not surprised), at receiving accounts of whole estates being consumed by fire, and the white inhabitants murdered without mercy.

No stronger proof can be adduced to show the humane treatment of the Spaniards to their slaves, than a view of the revolution of South America. During the sanguinary struggle that took place in that unfortunate country, the revolutionary party often proclaimed liberty to the slaves, to induce them to take up arms against the royal government. Far from taking advantage of this offer, all of them, with very few exceptions, remained on the estates, hiding themselves in the woods on the approach of the enemy; or they followed the fortune of their masters in emigration, or shared their dangers in the field. It is a fact equally true and worthy of remark, that the slaves belonging to a master who was a royalist invariably adhered to his principles, whilst, on the other hand, the slaves of the insurgents clung firmly to them through all the vicissitudes of revolutionary fortune. Again, when the whole slave population of the French part of the island of St. Domingo rose *en masse*, and destroyed every thing and every white person they could lay hands on, it is a most remarkable fact, and speaks more in favour of the treatment of the Spaniards to their slaves than volumes of argument, that the Spanish negroes, who were close to the revolted French negroes in the same island, remained perfectly tranquil. They followed their usual occupations; and it was not until the constitution of the year 1820 had been established in the Peninsula, that Spanish St. Domingo fell a prey to the republic of Hayti. But even then, when many white families emigrated, the

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slaves that could escape from the vigilance of the law which prohibited their emigration, followed their masters, preferring slavery and misery in a strange land to liberty and equality at home.*

It has been asserted, most unjustly, that the Spaniards are too lazy to make their slaves work, which is the reason assigned by some writers for their seeming humanity towards them. This is poor and shallow argument, invented to excuse the ill-treatment of slaves in other colonies which originates in avarice or cruelty. Let the Spanish slave laws be examined,—let the treatment of the slaves in the Spanish colonies be closely investigated,—and it will be found that the French and English commenced the reform of the abuses in the slave laws in their colonies, nearly two centuries after their first establishment. The Spanish laws respecting the treatment of slaves were on the same humane basis on which they are at this day, from the commencement of the importation of Africans. No alteration has been made in the ancient Spanish slave laws, except in some local regulations: in justice, in humanity, in dispensing protection, and favouring

* The fidelity evinced by the slaves, and their honesty, under most trying circumstances, have often formed a strange contrast with their state of bondage. My father-in-law, Don Francisco Aramburco, was one of the wealthiest landed proprietors and ship-owners in Caraccas. In 1813, when the independent party drove the royalists out of the country and were fast pressing on the capital, he had upwards of 200,000 dollars in silver, which in the confusion he could not carry with him; and there was no alternative between the money falling into the hands of the enemy, or confiding it to his slaves. He had a coffee estate in the centre of an elevated ridge of mountains, five leagues from the city; thither was the money conveyed at night, under the care of two old black Africans, and buried in a room in the house. My father-in-law emigrated with his family to the island of Curaçao, in which I was in garrison. A year and a half afterwards, when the royal troops regained possession of the country, he returned, and found his money safe. In 1817, Don Francisco went to Spain, and carried with him the two faithful slaves, to whom he gave their liberty and a reward. These men are now in Cadiz.

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the liberty of the African, they are precisely the same as they ever were. The local regulations established in this island for the government of the slave population, are founded on the general laws of the Indies on this subject, and on the royal decree promulgated for the government and education of slaves in every part of the Spanish dominions, which are monuments of humanity and wisdom. The laws and regulations are strictly enforced and attended to, which prevents abuses on the part of the masters, and excesses on the part of the slaves. The relative situation and reciprocal obligations between master and slave are placed in a clear and determinate point of view, the same as in Europe between a master and servant. By the Spanish laws, the slave is defended from the undue exercise of power by a cruel master. They provide, in an eminent degree, for the temporal comforts and the spiritual welfare of the slave; they fix exactly the number of hours slaves have to work daily for their masters, the quantity of food they are to receive, and the amount of punishment that can be inflicted on them. The cases are plainly marked in which an abuse of authority, or an excess committed by the master, is punishable by the laws. The cases in which slaves may acquire their liberty, and the manner of acquiring it, are also clearly established. This code establishes an equitable balance between the master and the slave. It unites their respective interests more closely, and induces to reciprocal good offices. The inculcation of the sacred principles of religion is strongly enforced in these regulations, as one of the chief duties of the master towards his slaves. This tends to soften their savage manners, and teaches them the advantages of order and good conduct: it does still more—it raises the negro's hope of reward beyond the world in which he lives, and makes him good and obe-

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dient from motives which impel more powerfully the human heart than the revolting feeling impressed on it by the dread of corporal punishment. I most respectfully beg leave to submit the spirit of these prudent regulations to the calm and dispassionate consideration of those distinguished personages on whose decision depends the fate of the West Indies.* I most strenuously recommend their attentive perusal to those who from motives of pure humanity contend for the immediate abolition of slavery,—in common with whom I condemn the conduct of those individuals, who, from sordid motives, would wish to perpetuate slavery to eternity.

The daily allowance of provisions to each slave in Puerto Rico is seven or eight plantains, or an equivalent in sweet potatoes or yams or other nutritive roots, eight ounces of salt-fish or meat, and four ounces of rice or peas. The master is also bound to give each slave three suits of clothes annually; each suit consisting of a shirt, a pair of pantaloons of coarse linen, a cap or hat, a handkerchief, and a woollen shirt or jacket for the rainy season. It is likewise enjoined that the greatest care shall be taken of children during infancy, and the necessary attention to them continued even after that tender period. Mothers are prohibited from working during the illness of their young children. Slaves are obliged to work for their masters only nine hours in the twenty-four, except in harvest, when they must work thirteen hours in the twenty-four. Female slaves of all ages, and males who are above sixty or under seventeen years of age, cannot be obliged to work in any way incompatible with their sex, age, or strength; nor are the females on any account to be mixed with the men. Slaves who from advanced age or sick-

* This was written previously to the passing of the Act for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies.—EDITOR.

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ness are not able to work, as also young children, are to be fed and clothed by the master; who cannot give them their freedom with the view of ridding himself of a useless burden, unless he makes a proper provision for the slave, sufficient for his maintenance, to the satisfaction of the protector of slaves. Another highly beneficial article of these regulations, is that by which owners of slaves must have them taught the Christian religion, in order that they may be baptized within a year from the time of their importation. Masters are obliged to send their slaves to mass on Sundays and festivals, and they cannot oblige them to work on those days. Masters who treat their slaves with cruelty, on complaint thereof being made to a magistrate, are obliged to sell their slave or slaves to any master the slaves may select, at a price fixed by arbiters, and not at the caprice of the owner. The moment a slave lawfully acquires money to purchase his freedom, the master cannot refuse him his liberty, on his paying the sum of appraisement awarded by arbiters, who are named by him and by the protector of slaves. A slave that should discover a conspiracy, whether among the other slaves or among the free people, either for the purpose of attacking the government, or with an intent to kill their master or his family, besides being made free, shall receive five hundred dollars, to be levied on the proprietors of estates. But if the accusation preferred by the slave should prove to be false, he shall be punished with all the rigour of the law in such cases. Masters or overseers only have authority to punish their slaves; and no punishment shall exceed twenty-five stripes. Any person, free or slave, wounding or killing a slave, is subject to the same penalties as if he had wounded or killed a free man. The erection of hospitals or commodious rooms for the sick is strictly enjoined and commanded. In order to prevent

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the disorders which must always originate from promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, marriage is promoted and encouraged by allowing the slaves of one owner to intermarry with the slaves of another; the owner of the male slave being obliged to purchase the female slave, at a price fixed on by arbiters. But if the owner of the male slave should not wish to purchase, then he is compelled to sell his slave to the owner of the female, on the same condition. After thirty-five years' service, the slave is to work one-third less than the other slaves; and after forty-five years' service, one-half less. A slave who shall serve his master faithfully for fifty years, counting from the age of fifteen, is declared to be free, and is to be maintained by his former master; or if the master is unable to maintain him, he must give him over to a magistrate for that purpose.

Such is the substance of these humane and beneficent laws, which do honour to the head and heart from whence they emanated, and reflect a brilliant lustre on the Spanish nation. Would to God that these admirable regulations, and the old Spanish code for the government of slaves which affords them such ample support, had been adopted in the whole of the West Indies, in place of those terrible and impolitic laws which have been decreed by other governments, or by colonial legislatures, without any regard to the future happiness of the slave, or to the true interest of the planter.

The cottages of the slaves in Puerto Rico are, like those in the other colonies, situate for convenience near the works, at some distance from the owner's residence, but generally within view of it. Unlike the negro houses of other islands, however, they are raised from the ground on posts, and the floor is boarded, or framed of the bamboo or palm tree laid across and closely united. This method

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of building their cottages is necessary in consequence of the humidity of the soil, which would be pernicious to health were they to lodge on the ground floor. These cabins are surrounded by plantain groves loaded with fruit, and trees of different sizes, which afford a delightful shade from the heat of the noon-day sun. The never failing verdure of the fields,—the clear and limpid streams which almost always run in view of the houses, winding round the bases of the numberless hills which variegate the face of the country, covered with the deep tints of a tropical foliage,—impart altogether an appearance of rural beauty and comfort seldom to be found about the cottages of the peasantry in any part of Europe. No luxurious, no costly furniture is to be found in the dwelling of the negro slave. His wants are few, and easily supplied. A hammock, made from the shreds of the bark of the cocoa-nut tree, crosses the cabin diagonally, and is used as a seat by day, and by night as a bed. Making allowance for the difference of climate, the lodging of the Spanish slave is a palace, compared to the miserable and smoky hut of the Irish peasant, who, with his children, lives promiscuously with cows and pigs, —happy indeed, and rich, if he has got these appendages to his family. The cabin of the negro varies in size according to the number of his family. They are generally made of wood, and thatched with the leaf of the palm tree, or with a strong dry grass resembling hay, and are impervious to the heaviest rains of the tropics. A few calabashes and cocoa-nut shells, of different sizes and shapes, which hold water, serve also as plates and dishes, and smaller ones as spoons; a bottle of holy water, a crucifix, and their Sunday clothes hung up around the walls,—a few bunches of plantains and Indian corn hanging from the roof,—are the only ornaments of their humble dwellings. Almost all the slaves in this island have fowls and pigs,

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and many of them possess cows and horses. In their hours of leisure they raise vegetables and roots, to supply the market; and, if industrious and frugal, in a short time they are enabled to save money to purchase their freedom, without encroaching on the property of their masters.

The daily labour of the slaves in Puerto Rico is conducted in much the same manner as that of the peasantry in Europe, with this difference, that the slave works much less than the peasant, and has fewer cares to press on his mind at the hour of rest. They are sent to the field after the rising of the sun, and they generally take coffee before they set out. They are under the superintendence of a driver, who is generally a well-behaved slave selected for the purpose. In Europe, the free labourers are under the vigilant eye of a steward, otherwise they would not work half as much as they do. The slaves work till half-past eight or nine o'clock, when they assemble to breakfast, which is prepared for them by the women. After being an hour at breakfast they resume the work, and go on until noon, when they are called to dinner, which is an hour of ease and social converse. Before sun-set they cease to work, and retire to their respective houses. Thus they work about nine hours in the twenty-four; but they do not perform half the work of a free labourer in the same period. It is a mistaken idea to suppose that the slaves are *driven* to labour in the Spanish colonies. They go on slowly, and at their ease. On Sundays and holidays they do not work, unless in time of harvest, when it is absolutely necessary to use extraordinary exertions. This period may be compared to the gathering in of grain in Europe, when men, women, and children are busily employed in securing their subsistence. The chief difference is, that the negro, naturally callous from his peculiar position, is not interested whether the crop be lost or not.

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The slave has another great advantage in the Spanish colonies. There are more holidays and festivals than in the British or Dutch islands, consequently they have more days of rest or leisure, which the industrious avail themselves of in order to cultivate their provision grounds. It is highly useful and desirable to keep the slaves continually employed, either on their master's lands, or on their own; for, in consequence of their condition as slaves, they are naturally addicted to vice, idleness, and theft. Even in Europe, what disorderly conduct do we not observe in the lower classes of society, from the effects of idleness, and its constant companions, licentiousness and crime.

All the slaves on the estates in Puerto Rico have land allowed them by their masters, which they cultivate for themselves. This is a most judicious arrangement: it attaches them to the country; it makes them take a deeper interest in the preservation of their master's property, and forms a happy and useful coalition of interests between them. Even with respect to land, the slaves of this fertile island have a decided advantage over the slaves of the small French, English, and Danish islands to windward, in which there is scarcely any spare land, and where, if there should be a small bit attached to the estates, it is generally so worn out by long cultivation that it scarcely produces any thing. It has been remarked by a very judicious writer, and I feel no hesitation in repeating an opinion which perfectly coincides with my own views and observations, that "it is a pity the slaves should wholly trust for their subsistence to plantains, maize, and other vegetables, which are liable to be destroyed by hurricanes, much more so than ground provisions, such as yams, potatoes, and other esculent roots. The dreadful scarcity which almost always follows a hurricane, and the fatal diseases which generally accompany it, brought on, in a

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great measure, by eating unwholesome fruits and roots, might be avoided; and this calamitous wind, which in a few hours destroys the work of years, might be rendered less afflicting to humanity. This is an object of serious consideration, and well worthy the attention of colonial governments: much evil might be avoided, many valuable lives saved, and that destroying storm which spares nothing—which in its fury roots up and whirls in the air, like so many straws, the most robust trees of the forest—and sweeps before it houses and plantations, man and beast—inundating the fields by a deluge of water from the heavens—destroying, by the irresistible violence of its torrents, every thing that had escaped the tempestuous violence of the wind,—might be rendered less fatal in its effects."

The slaves when sick are carefully attended to in the Spanish islands. Those employed in domestic service, when ill, are treated like children of the family. This fact I have had many opportunities of observing. The large estates are provided with hospitals by no means destitute of comfort; but the want of skilful medical practitioners is severely felt in the country: those who act as such, far from arresting by their knowledge the course of disease, I fear too frequently add to the lists of mortality by their ignorance and inexperience. I am persuaded that were regularly bred professional men encouraged by the planters, the mortality among their slaves would be much less than it is at present. The Spanish government has left a vacancy in the college of medicine and surgery at Cadiz for the education of two natives of Puerto Rico, and all expenses to be defrayed by the king; yet nobody has hitherto taken advantage of this generous and benevolent offer, which would afford a sure means of supplying the island with practitioners properly

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educated. The quacks who at present practise in the country are a disgrace to the profession of medicine, and are a scourge, in place of being an alleviation to human misery.

On the whole, considering impartially the state of slavery in this island, it may be asserted, without the hazard of contradiction, that with respect to food, lodging, and humane treatment, the Spanish slaves are in a far better and more fortunate condition than those in the English, French, Dutch, and Danish islands. I will even go farther, and assert that they are much better off as regards their physical condition, generally speaking, than the peasantry in the most civilized parts of Europe,—and they may be considered in a state of affluence when compared with the poor peasants of Ireland. In France, in the province of Brittany, the peasantry are frequently in a state of actual starvation. In the manufacturing towns of England the labouring classes are often reduced to the last extremity of want; and in the factories, children of twelve and fourteen years old are often obliged to toil sixteen or eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, at the unhealthy work of the loom; while the Spanish slave until he is eighteen is not obliged to work; and, when a man, he is well supplied with food, and is only obliged to labour moderately nine hours out of the twenty-four. The Laplander, wrapped in furs, and covered with dirt and vermin, is forced for nine months in the year to shut himself up with his family in a smoky hut, with a scanty supply of salt fish and rancid oil. And even in the fertile provinces of Andalusia, where the peasantry are more at their ease, and experience fewer wants, from the nature of the climate, than the same class of men in most other parts of Europe, I have frequently seen the working people in the country towns, in winter, standing in the

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market place, folded up in their long black cloaks, without being able to find employment.

There is not that gradual diminution in the number of slaves in the island of Puerto Rico by mortality, which happens in the colonies of all the other European powers. In Jamaica and most of the other British colonies the annual decrease is very considerable; and in the French islands of Guadaloupe and Martinique, it is enormous. In the island of Puerto Rico there is nearly an equality between the males and the females, as may be seen by a reference to the statistical account given in the preceding chapter,—which will always ensure an increase of numbers where men are treated with ordinary humanity. In Cuba, as well as in some other West India colonies, the males exceed the females by a great majority. The planters in those colonies, unfortunately, attending only to immediate interests, did not calculate that sooner or later the African trade must cease. That day has arrived; and the natural consequences are obvious. The slaves must, for a time, diminish where there is any considerable inequality in the numbers of the sexes.* It is an evil which cannot be speedily remedied by any of the ordinary means of human invention. The planters of Puerto

* The inequality of the sexes can scarcely be supposed to have had any perceptible influence in producing the *recent* decrease in the British colonies, whatever it may have had at an earlier period. It appears from the official returns laid before the House of Commons, that in 1817-18, the slaves in the British West India colonies amounted to 748,396, of whom 375,711 were males, and 372,685 females; exhibiting an inferiority in the number of the latter to the amount of only 3026. But in 1827-28, it appears from the same documents, that the entire number of slaves in the same colonies had decreased to 696,431, of whom 342,591 were males, and 353,840 females; shewing a superiority in the number of females over males to the amount of 10,249; but exhibiting on the whole slave population of the British West Indies (including the colonies on the South American continent) a decrease, in the space of about ten years, to the appalling extent of 51,965 souls! Such was the depopulating operation of the system of British West India slavery, abolished by act of parliament on the 1st August, 1834!—Ed.

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Rico, on the other hand, having at the commencement only very small capitals, purchased for utility, and not for speculation, an equal number of male and female slaves, among whom marriage has been carefully promoted by the Spanish laws. Care is taken of the young children of slaves born in domestic service, equal almost to the care bestowed on the master's own family. On a reference to the bills of mortality, we find that the births exceed the deaths among the slaves in this colony, on an average of many years, by two and a half per cent. In adverting to what I have already stated in the preceding chapter upon the population of this island, it is most satisfactory to find that the great increase in the slave population cannot be ascribed to the importation of African slaves, which has at all times been very scanty in consequence of the want of capital; neither can it be attributed to the introduction of slaves by new colonists. Although both these causes have in some measure contributed to increase the slave population, yet I have not included them in any of my calculations on this subject. The principal and never-failing sources of renovation are embodied in the wise and salutary laws enacted, and the superior good treatment which the negroes experience in all the Spanish colonies,when compared with the manner in which they were treated formerly in the colonies of other nations. These are facts, and those who would attempt to suppress or deny them, are to be pitied for their prejudices.

In comparing the feelings originating in slavery in different countries, it is very curious to observe the state of bondage in which public opinion still holds the people of colour in those free and enlightened provinces of the United States where slavery itself has been entirely

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abolished. For example,—a free man of colour is, by the laws of the northern States, eligible to vote at the elections for the return of members of congress, and for the election of a president; yet never has an instance occurred, although this class forms a considerable part of the population, that free people of colour have presumed to come forward to vote, however wealthy or educated they might be. The feeling of prejudice runs so strong, that, on a day of election, a black, or a man of colour, would not dare to appear near the hustings; for the lower orders of the Irish, who are very numerous in America, have imbibed an unconquerable antipathy to the negroes, and if a poor black should come forth on those days of riotous liberty, he would be certain to feel the effects of an Irish shillelah. But not only does the irresistible force of public opinion exclude them from taking any share in the government of that country which they contribute to support, and which by the constitution it is their birthright to enjoy, but in every office and employment of life, public and private, is the same degrading distinction kept up. So strong does the tide of prejudice run against this unfortunate race of men in that republic, that I have not seen a single tavern or shop, either in New York or Philadelphia, kept by a man of African race. The Irish, who in general are the carters and coachmen, will not even allow them to keep a cart or dray for the purpose of transporting goods to the stores and wharfs. Whenever any of them have been so imprudent as to make the trial, they have been obliged instantly to desist, in consequence of the combination formed by the white carters against them, who overturn their carts and pick quarrels with them. In all my travels in the United States, I have never seen a black, or a coloured man or woman, enter the cabin of a steam boat, or sit down to dinner with the other passen-

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gers. I saw several well-dressed coloured men and women on the deck of the steam boat, in my passage from Philadelphia to New York; and I was surprised to perceive that they remained all day on deck, and that they did not come into the cabin or appear at the dinner table. On asking the reason why they did not dine with us, I was informed that the captain of a steam boat would not receive cabin fare from a black or coloured man, however opulent or respectable. The same happens with the stage coaches,—in the hotels,—and at all public and private amusements.

In the southern states of the Union, the condition of the free blacks and people of colour is still worse; for after sunset no man of colour, however rich, or respectable, or learned, is allowed to be in the streets,—the persons so offending would be fined and confined. If a vessel, having on board a free black or coloured person, should enter any of the ports of the southern States, the captain would be severely fined, and the freeman of colour would be secured in the public jail, until the ship should be ready to put to sea.

There is a law in force at this moment in Virginia of the most cruel and unjust nature with respect to the people of colour: if a man of colour is accused of stealing property of the value of eighteen pence sterling, he is sold publicly and reduced to slavery; and if the accusation be false, he has no means of disproving it, for he would not be competent to give evidence, nor would the evidence of any other coloured person be taken in his behalf. Free people, therefore, are frequently sold as slaves in the United States, and are regularly advertised in the public papers. Thus, in that land of superlative freedom, there is as regards this class of men

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more real despotism than in any country on the face of the earth.

From all the observations I have been able to make, I am convinced that the free blacks and men of colour in the republic of the United States, are greater slaves, in consequence of the tyrannical force of public opinion, than the slaves in the colonies of Spain; for they are generally employed only as servants, tailors, scavengers, and porters,—above which scale they cannot rise. They are admitted into no society—they can hold no official situation, civil or military—they are the very outcasts of humanity—the veriest slaves on earth in that land of freedom. Even in the churches and places of public worship is the same distinction kept up. The people of colour seldom enter the places of worship belonging to the white people; and if they should do so, there is a place or gallery allotted to them, railed in, where they are effectually separated from the white congregation. The blacks and free people of colour have built churches and chapels exclusively for themselves, and, by way of reprisal, they have a railed gallery into which only the whites are admitted, should they venture to visit their churches.

In the Spanish colonies, what a contrast is there to all this! In the sanctuary of the Almighty, whites, mulattoes, blacks, free people of colour, and slaves, are to be seen promiscuously mingled, without any distinction of place, offering their prayers together to the Almighty. The wealthy proprietor is seen kneeling beside the poor slave, and for the time all recollection of superiority is absorbed in the great idea that they are offering their united thanksgivings to the common God and Father of all mankind!

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CHAPTER IX.

The Substitution of Free for Coercive Labour the best Preparation for the Extinction of Slavery—No Free Field Labourers to be found in the English and French Colonies—Description of the Class of Free Cultivators in Puerto Rico—Contrast between the Aspect of Rural Labour in the Colonies of Spain and in other Parts of the West Indies—Large Proportion of the Produce of Puerto Rico raised by Free Labour—Misapprehensions respecting the British Plan of Emancipation—Proofs that Sugar and Coffee may be profitably raised by Free Labour—Cultivation of Sugar in Margarita by Free Labourers—Economy of Free Labour—Productiveness of Free Labour in Puerto Rico, as compared with Slave Labour in Jamaica, Guadaloupe, and other West India Colonies—Calculation of the Expenses of a Sugar Estate cultivated by Slaves, and Comparison of the Profits realised with those resulting from Free Labour—Advantages that would accrue to the Planters from converting the Slaves into Free Labourers.

THE Spanish colonies, as I have already shown, form a striking contrast with the colonies of other European powers in the West Indies, when we consider the great preponderance of the whites and free coloured population over the slaves in numerical force. But this contrast will

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be considerably heightened,—and it reflects further honour on the colonial regulations of Spain,—if we take a retrospect of the preparatory measures adopted to facilitate the final emancipation of the slaves, by the timely establishment and encouragement of free labour in her colonies. The progressive substitution of free for coercive labour forms, in my opinion, the best and safest preparation for the total and unqualified emancipation of the West India slaves. Unfortunately, in the colonies of England and France, the efficiency of free labour, or the possibility of its substitution for that of slaves, has never yet been fairly tried. The whole of the lands in the greater part of the West India islands, are in the hands of a few large proprietors; and from the circumstance of agricultural labour being exclusively performed by slaves, and slavery carrying on its face the indelible stigma of infamy and degradation, the whites and free people of colour, however miserably poor, could not be prevailed upon, from any consideration of interest or feeling of independence, to work as common labourers in the fields. Therefore, the snug proprietor of a few well-cultivated acres of land, who toils with his family to procure a comfortable living, is a specimen of rural industry and of domestic happiness not to be found in any of the colonies of France or England, in which the lower orders of the whites and free people of colour generally live in a wretched state of misery, vice, and prostitution.

I shall now proceed to prove, by the practical example of the Spanish colonies, that white men, equally as people of colour, born within the tropics, can work in the fields as well as the natives of Africa; that all the productions of those climates may be raised by their exertions; and that free labour, under proper regulations and restrictions, is cheaper and more advantageous to the planter than the

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forced labour of slaves. Free labourers, both white and free coloured, who are not to be found in any of the British or French West India islands, form a considerable and most useful portion of the agricultural population of the island of Puerto Rico. Of this class, formerly, a great number had no lands of their own to cultivate, until the Spanish government, with a wise provision, issued an order for the distribution of the crown lands, to be made without any tax or retribution, among those who should apply for them, with no other proviso or injunction than that the lands so given should be cultivated; for otherwise the holder could not alienate them, either by sale or donation; and that, on a complaint being preferred of their not being put into a state of cultivation, they should revert to the crown. Therefore, in making a calculation of the number of inhabitants of Puerto Rico who live by agricultural pursuits, we find that there are not more than about 45,000 who have no lands of their own, and who generally occupy a piece of land and a thatched cabin on the grounds belonging to the more wealthy proprietor of 500 or 1000 acres. They are tenants at will; but notwithstanding, if the landlord should wish to eject them from their cabin and lands, he must previously pay them the value of the land they may have cleared of wood, and fitted for pasture or cultivation,—as well as the value of the coffee and fruit trees, canes, and plantains, they may have planted, ascertained by a regular appraisement, with all the formalities of the strictest justice. Formerly this portion of the population, who are mostly whites, lived like a wandering horde of Arabs, strolling from place to place, without any fixed abode or regular employment; they merely built temporary huts in the woods to shelter themselves and families from the inclemency of the seasons; they sowed

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nothing whatever in order to secure a subsistence for their families, but derived a precarious living from the gleanings of the neighbouring plantations, from the wild fruits of the woods, and the fish which abound in the numerous rivers which fertilize the country. These people, formerly a nuisance, now apply themselves to the cultivation of the soil; they bring up their children in comparative affluence; they are comfortably lodged in thatched cabins impervious to the heavy rains of the tropics; their dwellings are surrounded by patches of land, well fenced in, where they cultivate an abundance of ground provisions, plantains, fruit and coffee trees; besides, they rear pigs and poultry, and all of them, with few exceptions, possess one or two cows, which furnish milk to their families; and in general, they have one or two horses to carry the surplus of their provisions to market.

This salutary change in the habits of these people, as well as in the habits of active industry to which the free people of colour are now inured, who have land of their own, or hold it as tenants, has been effected by the rigid enforcement of the laws instituted against vagrants in the Spanish colonies, declaring to be such, all free labourers who do not sow a sufficient quantity of provisions to maintain themselves and families, or who cannot make it appear to the proper authorities that they derive their subsistence from day labour on the lands of another. In a population of 400,000 souls, scarcely a vagrant, in the strict sense of the word, is at present to be found among the labouring classes. A stranger with a bag of gold, might travel alone and unarmed, from one extremity of the island to the other, without being robbed or molested. The greater number of the inhabitants who live in the country, sleep at

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night with their doors open, without any apprehension. Robbery and assassination have given way to habits of peaceful industry. Large sums of government money are every month transported from the custom-houses on the coasts to the treasury of the capital, sometimes a journey of three days, with no other escort than the man who conducts them on horseback, armed only with a whip; yet never, in any one instance, has an attempt been made to attack the treasure so slightly guarded.

The number of landed proprietors in Puerto Rico who hold their lands in perpetuity, are 19,140, and the extent of land under pasture and cultivation is, according to the government returns, 1,437,285 acres,—which would give about 75⅛ acres of cultivated land to each proprietor, on an average. But this calculation is according to the census of 1828: since that period many thousands of acres of crown land have been granted to the inhabitants; many hundreds of acres have been cleared of wood, and are now transformed into fields of rice and provisions, plantain groves and pasture lands; and in every part of the island, in the towns, in the villages, among the mountains, and in the valleys, new houses have been built, and every part of the colony exhibits pleasing objects at every step, to convince the observer of the active industry and the rapid advancement which accompany free labour.

For about a shilling sterling of daily wages, a free labourer will work in the field from sun-rise to sun-set in Puerto Rico, and on a moderate calculation will perform more work during that time than two slaves. One of the principal advantages which results to the planter from free labour is, that he sinks no capital, as he must do if he purchases slaves; nor does he incur the loss of it in case his labourers should die, or sustain the expense of curing them during sickness, or of maintaining them in

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the decrepitude of old age; without taking into account the moral infamy and degradation inseparable from forced labour, where the wretched slave is sold like a piece of merchandize, and whipped like a beast of burthen.

The inhabitants of Puerto Rico are distributed over the surface of the island in a manner totally dissimilar to those of the other West India islands. In the colonies of England and France, the whites and free people of colour are concentrated principally in the towns and villages, where they keep taverns, and follow the trades and occupations which generally fall to the lower orders of society in Europe. The country is the residence (often a temporary one) only of the planter, his overseer, and his family, together with the slaves on the respective estates. There is nothing like a peasantry to be seen; all is forced labour; every thing bears the mark of slavery; no happy middling classes exist between the master and the slave; there is no alternation but haughty command and abject submission; there is no labour but what is extorted by compulsion, and in which those who execute it take no interest, because they derive no profit from it—no comfort —no hope from exertion; therefore they go on slowly and sullenly, day after day, without making any advances towards happiness or civilization.

But the Spanish colonies present a very different picture for our contemplation. The island of Puerto Rico contained in the year 1832, 57 towns and villages, on a superficies of 333 square leagues, in which there were only 3600 houses covered with slates or shingles, and 2818 thatched cabins, making a total of 6448 in the towns and villages, while in the country there were 14,628 slated houses, and 23,249 cabins,—making a total of 37,877; and in the whole extent of the island there were 44,295 houses and cabins: therefore, assuming the

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population to amount the same year, according to an approximate calculation, to 400,000, it would give a little more than nine individuals, on an average, for each house and cabin. By these data it appears that 340,893 individuals of the population live in the country, in which number the slaves are included; consequently, it may be inferred that nearly the whole of the inhabitants subsist by agricultural pursuits.

I hope also to be able to establish in a most satisfactory manner, that three-fourths of the produce consumed in and exported from the island is cultivated by free labour. Taking a medium between the census made by order of the Spanish government in 1828, and the number of slaves whom I know positively to have been kept out of the registry by their owners, I calculate that there are 45,000 slaves in Puerto Rico: deducting from this number about 15,000 employed in domestic service, 30,000 slaves, men, women, and children, remain for field labour. There are at this day, on the island, 300 sugar and 148 coffee estates, regularly established and under cultivation, which would give to each estate, on an average, 37 slaves of every description, of whom many must be inefficient in consequence of infancy, old age, disease, or accidents. The whole of the sugar cane cultivated in 1832, produced 414,663 quintals of sugar, each quintal weighing 112 lbs., besides 1,324,717 gallons of molasses, and 16,600 puncheons of rum. The coffee plants yielded the same year, 250,000 quintals of coffee, which, on an average, were sold on the spot for twelve Spanish dollars each. There are, exclusively of the 300 sugar estates already mentioned, 1277 cane plantations on a small scale, with wooden mills and rollers, belonging to independent proprietors, and cultivated, with few exceptions, by free labourers. Thus, after having investi-

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gated this important subject, and acquired every information that could tend to lead to just conclusions, I pronounce, on the evidence of practical experience obtained on the spot from the purest sources, that at least 80,000 quintals of sugar, 400,000 gallons of molasses, and 6000 puncheons of rum, have been the product of free labour,—which clearly demonstrates that those articles, furnished in the French and British colonies exclusively by the work of slaves, may certainly be obtained by the operation of free labour. The friends of human nature, the friends of rational liberty, the advocates for the prudent emancipation of the West India slaves, must rejoice in the triumph of this practical experiment of free labour within the tropics. Although I have allowed to each of the coffee estates 37 slaves, yet the greater number of them are cultivated solely by free labourers. But even admitting what is not the fact, that the whole number of coffee estates were cultivated by slaves, and allowing that each of them yields 300 quintals of coffee ready for the market, it will only make a total of 44,400 quintals produced by slave labour; but as the island produced in 1832 a crop that exceeded 250,000 quintals, 205,000 quintals at least must have been the product of free labour. The same year, 34,902 quintals of tobacco and 9627 quintals of cotton, cultivated in the island, were legally exported. The tobacco averaged five dollars per quintal; and the cotton, which is equal in quality to that of Pernambuco, averaged twenty dollars per quintal,—which, added to the quantities which we may suppose had been shipped without paying duty and consumed by the inhabitants, were cultivated exclusively by free labourers.

In like manner all the horned cattle are reared by free labourers. There are upwards of 100,000 head of horned cattle on the island. Almost every man who

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possesses a cabin and a bit of land, has also two or three cows to give milk to his family, which, with plantains, sweet potatoes, and cassada bread, constitutes their chief food. The more wealthy proprietors, who have considerable herds of cattle, distribute the calves, when a year old, in lots of two, four, and six, among the poor tenants and poor landed proprietors; these take care of them until they are fit for sale, when the profit is equally divided between the proprietors and the persons who have taken care of them; and by this means, a great number of cattle are fattened every year, and sold to the vessels which come to the island, for the purpose of transporting them to the English, French, and Danish islands. In 1832, cattle to the amount of 220,000 dollars were exported legally. The cattle of Puerto Rico bring a higher price than those of South America, in consequence of their being fattened on the finest pasture land in the world, and being as tame as the cattle of England. There were also on the island about 80,000 horses, 1200 mules, 600 asses, 7000 sheep, and 5000 goats, the greater part of which are reared by the free peasantry. Besides the valuable productions I have just enumerated, there were 80,000 quintals of rice, 45,000 quintals of Indian corn, 700 quintals of pepper, and many other minor productions, the principal part of which are cultivated by free labour.

I have only deemed it necessary to observe in this place, the exact quantum of the staple productions of the tropics which has been the result of free labour in one year in Puerto Rico; for it establishes the fact beyond the possibility of contradiction, that every description of West India produce can be raised by free labour in the colonies; and that the white and free coloured population may, by proper discipline and regu-

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lation, be brought to work as day labourers. The cultivation of tropical produce will unquestionably become in time cheaper and more advantageous, as it is certainly more humane, by free labour than by slaves. I have tried the experiment on a coffee estate of my own; I have also seen it repeatedly tried on indigo plantations, —the most unhealthy as well as laborious class of tropical agriculture,—and I have always found that the cultivation, both of coffee and indigo, was cheaper by employing free labourers than by slaves.

Although I had always felt and acknowledged the injustice and the impolicy of the continuance of slavery under any shape, and had ever been an advocate for its gradual abolition, yet, from my experience in the colonies, I was strongly of opinion that the immediate emancipation of the slaves would be inexpedient and dangerous,—reasoning on the supposition that the British government had it in contemplation to proclaim freedom to the bondmen of its colonies, without the adoption of any preparatory or precautionary arrangements to make such a measure compatible with the security of property, and with the ultimate safety of all classes in the colonies. I was even led to understand in the West Indies, (such has been the extent of misrepresentation!) that it was the intention of the British government to withdraw the troops from the islands, leaving them a prey to all the disasters which must necessarily arise from the dissolution of every civil tie. But I had the good fortune to meet in Madrid with the patriotic William Allen, who acquainted me that the intentions of the British ministers were, by a line of policy at once liberal, benevolent, and just, to emancipate the

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slaves, and at the same time to strengthen the colonies, by drawing closer the ties that connect them with the mother country,—and by acting on general principles of justice, heedless of party clamour. I have read with pleasure the rational plans which the gentleman alluded to has traced in his little work, entitled "Colonies at Home," for the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes in England and Ireland. I have maturely weighed those plans; and having considered the powerful means which the British government have at their disposal, the perseverance with which any measure of public utility is pursued, whether the ministers be Whigs or Tories,—the energy, the union, and the patriotism displayed by every individual under government to carry their resolutions into effect, I have come to the conclusion that a plan of the description of Mr. Allen's, with some local alterations, might be rendered applicable to the slaves in the West Indies. From all the observations that I have been able to make respecting the advantages of free labour in the cultivation of West Indian produce, wherever it has had a fair trial, I have no doubt remaining on my mind, that if the planters would cordially co-operate with their respective governments, the whole of the slaves might be emancipated without danger; and that the colonies would thus increase both in agricultural wealth and commercial importance. I have already stated, that all the productions of the tropics may be raised by free labour, and that the greater part of those of Puerto Rico are cultivated in this manner. I shall now offer some additional facts, and suggest some new ideas which have occurred to me on this grave and most important subject. Most happy do I feel to have it in my power to offer information that will bear the test of investigation, and which can be supported by the living evidence of practical men.

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It has been observed generally, that the free blacks in the West Indies are naturally indolent and reckless about the morrow; but this indolence arises from their position in society—from the want of stimulus to exertion. The motives and the means of industry must be supplied before we can expect the blacks to be industrious. Previously to the distribution of the crown lands, Puerto Rico was miserably poor, and the free blacks were indolent and vicious. Since that wise measure was adopted in 1815, and since the captain-general ordered churches to be built in every village throughout the island, these people have become more orderly and industrious. When the poor whites and free blacks lived in isolated huts, associating only with their own families, and with neighbours as wretched as themselves, they resembled the naked savages on the banks of the river Oronoco. They are now enrolled in the militia, and are obliged to appear in the villages on Sundays; and as, by continual exhortations, the curates have induced their families to attend divine worship, they all go more decently clad than heretofore, each person being anxious to appear to the best advantage. Hence, new wants have sprung up, and, in order to gratify their natural feelings, they have been obliged to become more industrious than formerly; consequently, more land is cultivated by individual labour than at a period when there was no stimulus to industry. This is one of the principal causes of the progressive advancement of Puerto Rico to its present prosperity.

The same change may be expected to occur in the habits of the negro slaves, when the same inducements to labour are held out to them: when they are taught to desire decent apparel, and the comforts of a home, new ideas of order will be engendered; a sense of character, self-esteem, and a desire of knowledge, will go hand in hand

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with progressive industry. Let the slaves be made free—give them their plots of land and their cabins—let them be educated in a sense of moral duty—and they will be convinced that it is only by industry and order that they can be happy. They will then feel an interest in the country, and love the government that protects them.

I shall now endeavour to show, by the experience of other countries, that if the slaves were located on the estates of their former masters as free labourers—if each family had a piece of land allotted to it for cultivation on paying a moderate rent, the planter might still raise sugar and coffee at less expense, and with less risk, than by the work of slaves. I have already stated, that the sugar cane is cultivated by the labour of freemen in Puerto Rico; I shall now bring additional proofs to show that it is also cultivated elsewhere by the same means. In the island of Margarita, formerly belonging to Spain, now forming a part of the republic of Colombia, all the sugar cane raised is by free labour; and all the sugar and molasses made, and rum distilled, are produced by free labourers. It is true that the island does not produce a sufficient quantity of these articles for its own consumption, but this does not alter the question; it yields as much, or perhaps more, at present, than it did when cultivated by slaves. I speak not from hearsay: I have visited that island—I have been on every plantation—and I have observed the exertions and the industry of the free labourers. I shall only offer one example in this place in corroboration of this fact. A friend of mine, an Englishman, Doctor Emery, rented an estate in Margarita, in the year 1824, from the Colombian government; it was called the Estancia, and is situate in the centre of the island, in the valley of Paraguachi. When the island was in possession of Spain, the estate belonged

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to a convent of monks; and on it were from fifty to sixty slaves. The republicans drove the monks off the island; the able-bodied slaves, in order to obtain their freedom, enlisted in the victorious army, and the estate became the property of the new government. The lands were divided among a great many poor persons, who paid a rent in kind, and the whole was rented to one person, who received the rents of the under-tenants, and paid government a certain yearly sum. One of the conditions under which the tenants held these lands was that they were obliged to sell to the head landlord, at harvest time, all the canes they might have raised, at a valuation. When I visited Margarita in June, 1827, there were upwards of a hundred families living on the lands, each with a comfortable cottage, a field of cane, Indian corn, and plantains, all most carefully cultivated. They worked for a shilling a day on the property of the landlord; and the young men who had no family to support, hired themselves as labourers, by the month, for about a pound sterling. They made sugar, distilled rum, and performed all the laborious work formerly done only by slaves; thus the landlord had his cane planted and cut without any trouble, and each tenant cultivated his plot of land with care, for on his industry depended the comforts of himself and family. I have heard old and intelligent neighbours say, that the estate thus cultivated produced considerably more than when in possession of the monks, and worked by slaves. All the sugar cane raised on that island is cultivated precisely in the same manner. There were six stills for making rum constantly at work, managed by free labourers, and supplied with sugar and molasses from the fields of the small tenants. The population of Margarita may amount to about 27,000 individuals; and every body subsists by his own labour. The soil is extremely

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dry; there is a great scarcity of water; but the islanders are very industrious, for, although they sometimes lose two or three successive crops from drought, yet they still continue to plant and to cultivate their land, which is well fenced in. In a country like that which I have just described, notwithstanding there are scarcely any restraints of law or government, yet I have never seen a more quiet or orderly set of people; no person would have imagined that so many slaves could have been reduced to industry, merely by letting them have an equality of rights and privileges with their fellow men.

It must be evident to all who have observed and compared land cultivated by freemen and by slaves in the West Indies, that the labour of the former is double in quantity and better done than that of the latter. It is also obvious, that under free labour, where men are free agents, a country must be more prosperous than one in which a certain class of the inhabitants are forced to work without having any interest whatever in the soil. Individually, the freeman will perform more work and waste less than the slave; he will endeavour to employ usefully every hour of the day, because it is his interest to be industrious. The slave, on the other hand, works unwillingly; he consumes and wastes as much as he can, and he loiters his hours away. In confirmation of this truth, it is only necessary to observe the progressive advance of agriculture in Puerto Rico since the period when the crown lands were divided—which may be considered as the commencement of free labour in that colony. In 1810, the value of produce exported, amounted only to 65,672 dollars; and in 1832, it exceeded three millions of dollars. In 1810, the island only produced 3796 quintals of sugar; and in 1832, it produced 414,663

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quintals, 76lbs., of which 340,163 quintals, and 6lbs., was legally exported.

In the next place I shall examine the profits of a sugar estate cultivated by slaves, in Puerto Rico, in which the lands are considerably more productive than those of the British or French islands. I believe it will be found, on an attentive examination of facts, that both the planter and the country at large would gain by the prudent abolition of slavery. The best estate in Puerto Rico, with a competent number of slaves, and with sufficient capital to meet any contingency, does not produce, at this day, more than three per cent. on the capital laid out, though managed with the greatest economy. How much less, therefore, must an estate worked with slaves in the British and French islands produce, where the lands are much inferior, and the contributions and taxes much heavier than in the Spanish island? According to a calculation which is considered to be correctly made, the island of Jamaica exported in 1823, with 342,382 slaves, 1,417,758 quintals of sugar, which was a year of great fertility in the West Indies; and Puerto Rico, with 45,000 slaves, at the highest calculation, produced 414,663 quintals: therefore Jamaica, with a number of slaves nearly nine times greater, yielded only about $3\frac{1}{2}$ times more sugar, which clearly shews that free labour in Puerto Rico contributes largely to produce even sugar. To the number of free labourers only can this difference be attributed; for it must be acknowledged that although the soil of Jamaica is not so fertile as that of Puerto Rico, yet the cultivation of the cane is much better understood. In the same year, the three British islands of Barbadoes, St. Vincent's, and Grenada, which, with the exception of Jamaica, produce most sugar of all the British Antilles, with the

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labour of 128,000 slaves, yielded 794,567 quintals of sugar; that is to say, that with more than three times the number of slaves, they produced less than double the quantity of sugar raised in one year in Puerto Rico. The same year, the whole of the British West India colonies, with 627,000 slaves, yielded only 3,005,366 quintals of sugar; which proves that with 15½ times more slaves, they only produced 7½ times more sugar than Puerto Rico. In 1821, 428,962 quintals of sugar, 20,758 quintals, 96 lbs. of coffee, and 1320 quintals of cotton, were produced in the island of Guadaloupe, by the labour of 87,998 slaves; while Puerto Rico, with about half the number of slaves, moderately worked and humanely treated, produced, besides the quantity of sugar already stated, 25,000 quintals of coffee, 34,163 quintals of tobacco, and 9166 quintals of cotton, together with cattle, pepper, rice, and many minor productions. This simple enumeration of facts is sufficient to establish the advantages arising from, and the extent of, free labour in Puerto Rico. For although the soil of the latter island is, on a general average, more fertile than that of any other of the West India islands, yet in the French and British colonies the land is better cultivated, there is better machinery, and better roads, and the slaves are worked much harder. Since 1823, in the whole of the British and French islands, there has been a great diminution in the quantity of sugar produced by slave labour; while in Puerto Rico, it has progressively increased from the employment of free labour. A short time ago I had to consult a most intelligent French planter, established in the latter colony, in order to obtain information with respect to the real state of its agriculture. He assured me, that the cultivation of the sugar cane with slaves, did not at present pay the expense attending it; and that in order to keep up his

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sugar establishment, he was obliged to plant coffee, sow provisions, and fatten cattle, with the aid of free labour. The reason is obvious,—the slaves cannot be obliged to work more than a certain number of hours, and during that time they do as little as they can,—while on the contrary, the free labourers, being paid, work from sun-rise to sun-set, and do their tasks carefully, otherwise they would not find employment the next day.

I have considered this to be a proper place to present the details of expenses attending an estate worked by slaves and the profits arising from it; which will clearly shew that it is very erroneous to support the doctrine, that coercion is preferable to free labour. This calculation I submit with the greatest confidence to the West India proprietors, for it is made by an intelligent planter of Santa Cruz, who has for several years managed estates in Puerto Rico, and therefore makes his calculations from practical experience. In order to go on sure grounds of argument, I submitted his calculation to the revision of six of the most intelligent planters to be found on the island, who gave their opinion that it was minutely exact in all its parts and bearings. In order to make this calculation, good lands were selected; and according to the accounts which this gentleman kept himself on a well-regulated estate, which he managed and directed for many years, I shall form my estimate of slave labour on a plantation of moderate size,—say one that will produce 200 hogsheads of sugar of 10 quintals each, and 80 puncheons of rum, of 100 gallons each, proof 25. In general, a well-established estate should have one-third of the land employed in cane; one-third in pasturage, and in the cultivation of provisions, such as plantains, yams, potatoes, cassada, and other esculent vegetables peculiar to the island; and which, with salt fish, corn-meal, or meat, supplied weekly,

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and small stock, as pigs and poultry, of their own raising, constitute the chief support of the slaves. The remaining third should be reserved in wood for the purpose of supplying timber for repairing the various buildings, and supplying fire-wood for the boiling and distilling houses, in addition to the cane trash, as well as for burning lime or bricks. An estate in Puerto Rico yielding 200 hogsheads of ten quintals each, allowing an acre on a moderate average to produce forty quintals, will require fifty acres to be planted in cane; and the whole extent of land required will be about 200 acres. As it is my intention to give the best idea I can of the profits to be made by sugar planting in this island under favourable circumstances, no allowance is made for a dead capital invested in unproductive woodland; but I calculate 150 acres as sufficient for all the purposes mentioned, appropriating fifty acres (one-fourth of the whole) to the culture of cane. The price of land in Puerto Rico depends not only on its quality, but much also on its situation. Land on the coast fit for planting cane is much higher than in the interior, from the greater facility of carrying the produce to market. For instance, in the vicinity of Ponce and Guayama on the south coast, I conceive it would be difficult to get land fit for planting cane, unless at a very high price. In the interior of the country the land is of superior quality, but the roads, although much improved within the last seven years, are yet in a state such as to make the freight of produce from the interior parts of the country difficult and expensive, particularly in rainy weather. I shall therefore take a medium between the price of the lands in the interior, and those situate on the most eligible parts of the coast.

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Calculation of the Expenses attending the Establishment of, and the Profits arising from, a Sugar Estate in Puerto Rico worked by Slaves.

	DOLLARS.		DOLLARS.
Say 200 acres of land, at fifty dollars per acre	10,000	Eight crook horses, at thirty dollars	240
A cattle mill of large size .	2000	Six carts	900
A boiling house, with a till of 5 sugar pans well mounted, a still-house, with butts complete, and curing house .	8000	Proprietor's dwelling house .	3000
A good still of 300 gallons, well mounted	2000	Overseer's house	500
Twenty-five pair of good oxen	2500	Hospital	1000
		Negro houses	2000
		Two magass houses . . .	200
		Cost of estate . . .	32,340

The stock on an estate of this magnitude ought not to consist of less than forty good negroes.

	DOLLARS.		DOLLARS.
Price of forty prime negroes, at 300 dollars each . . .	12,000	distiller, and one sugar boiler, at 500 dollars each	3000
Two negro drivers, at 600 do.	1200		
One cooper, one mason, one carpenter, one mover,* one		Making the cost of slaves .	16,200

All which I now bring into one point of view:—

	DOLLARS.		DOLLARS.
Lands	10,000	Slaves	16,200
Buildings and cattle . . .	22,340		
		Total cost of the establishment	48,540

I here state the cost of an estate in Puerto Rico which, on a medium of good and bad years, ought to produce 200 hogsheads of sugar of ten quintals each, and eighty puncheons of rum of 100 gallons each. For foreigners coming to this island to establish themselves, it would, in my opinion, be more advisable to purchase estates already established than to create new ones from uncleared

*A man called a *mover* is peculiar to Puerto Rico; for the cattle are tethered in the pasture grounds, and moved from one place to another three times a day.

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lands; for great labour and risk would be thereby avoided. Good lands already established can always be obtained for a small sum, prompt payment, and the remainder at easy instalments; whereas an estate that requires to be raised from its foundation, on the basis I have just described, to produce 200 hogsheads of sugar, will require the expenditure of 48,540 dollars before any return can be made for the capital. Therefore, supposing sugar to bear an average price of three dollars, which is the average of its value for many years, 200 hogsheads, or 2000 quintals, will produce $6000
Eighty puncheons of rum, at 25 dollars . . 2000

Gross value of annual crop . . . 8000
The expenses of such an estate, in maintaining the negroes, and, if an overseer is not employed, the proprietor superintending it himself, will amount annually, with every possible economy, to 6000
Average loss of negroes, say two per cent. per annum . . . . . 600—6600

Nett produce 1400

Which amount would be equivalent only to three per cent. per annum on the capital employed in the estate. According to the foregoing, the produce of each negro employed would amount to fifty quintals of sugar. This may be considered to be rather more than a medium calculation of the produce of the whole island, and not by any means an exaggerated statement. There are many estates which produce a third more, and few that produce less. For the information of foreigners who may feel inclined to transport their capitals from the worn-out lands of the other islands, I consider it useful that they

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may be acquainted with the detail of the expenses which I have summed up in a total of 6000 dollars.

	Dollars.	Cents.
The yearly clothing of a negro costs . .	7	91
If the negroes are well fed, each negro would require one quart of meal per day, or an equivalent in other food: at this rate it would require a puncheon of meal per annum for each negro, which at the average price this year, would be	30	0
Each negro requires 4 lbs. of cod-fish per week, or an equivalent, which would make 208 lbs. per annum, at four dollars per quintal .	8	30
Food for each negro per annum . .	39	30
Medical attendance and medicines . .	2	50
A negro requires a hoe each year . .	0	75
Ditto, a machete	0	50
	1	25

RECAPITULATION.

Clothing for one year	7	91
Food ditto	39	30
Medical attendance and medicine . .	2	50
Implements for work	1	25
Freight for these articles	1	2½
Annual expense for each negro . .	52	8½
Expenses attending the manufacture of sugar and rum, including the implements necessary for its manufacture, lime, repair of boilers, still, &c., cost of carts, axes, spades, which on an exact calculation may be rated at . .	705	66

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	Dollars.	Cents.
The direct tax paid to government on an estate making 200 hogsheads of sugar, is about	400	0
Duty paid in exportation of ditto	62	50
Annual direct tax	462	50
Wood, and making hogsheads	6	87
Freight of each puncheon of rum, and back freight of the empty puncheon	1	25
Wear and tear of a puncheon, calculating that a puncheon will last four crops, the value being six dollars	1	50
	2	75
Each bullock and horse requires one dozen of ropes per annum, as the cattle are tied up continually: the cost of ropes, each	1	0
Besides the negro mover, who changes the cattle, it is economy to employ a free man to take care of the stock, whose salary would be 100 dollars per annum, making for each head of cattle	2	0
	3	0
An estate such as is here laid down, requires a good manager, which will cost	1000	0
An overseer and his food	300	0
Nourishment for the sick	100	0
	1400	0

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Casual expenses attending the business of the estate,—for the purpose of going to market for the purchase of supplies and the sale of produce	200	0

RECAPITULATION.

	Dollars.	Cents.
Annual expense of 40 negroes, according to the foregoing statement	2083	20
Annual cost of utensils for manufacturing rum and sugar, repairs of buildings, wear and tear of carts, &c.	705	0
Direct tax and custom-house duties	462	50
Expenses attending sending to market, and manufacture of 200 hogsheads of sugar	1378	0
Ditto, on 80 puncheons of rum	200	0
Ditto, on 58 head of cattle and horses	174	0
Overseer's salary and food	300	0
Nourishment for the sick	100	0
For transacting the business of the estate	200	0
Allowing for extra expenses , ...	398	0
Total contingent expenses	6000	70

Being the amount already put down in the calculation of the expenses.

I have been thus prolix in my statement, in order to remove doubts, and to anticipate any inquiries that may be made on this subject. I beg it may be well understood, that the profits arising from an estate so established are calculated under the most favourable circumstances; for I believe that there is not a single estate on the island which cultivates sugar only, by slaves alone, that can pay one shilling of interest for the capital; the proof of this is that all the large sugar establishments on the south coast, which are worked exclusively by slaves, having no pasture lands, and furnishing no other products, are involved in debt and difficulties; while those on the north coast, where there is a mixture of free labour, unless in particular cases where there has been great mismanagement, are free from debt.

It is evident that the slave costs more as a labourer and works less than the free labourer.

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	Dollars.	Cents.
The food, clothes, and incidental expenses of a slave, cost annually, on the lowest possible calculation	52	8½
Five per cent. interest on 300 dollars, the price of a labouring slave .	15	0
Total annual cost	67	8½

which, considering a dollar to be equivalent to 4*s.* 6*d.* sterling, makes £15. 1*s.* 6*d.* yearly wages, or nearly 1*s.* per day for the labour of each slave; deducting from 365 days 52 Sundays, on which they do not work, exclusive of holidays, and without taking into account the losses and expense of sickness and casualties. It is well known that the free labourers in the Spanish colonies work twice as much as slaves in the same time; therefore, if the planters, by proper management, by liberal conduct, and supported by government, can convert their now unwilling and refractory slaves into free labourers, the advantages resulting to themselves will be great indeed. It is a false idea to suppose that free men will not or cannot work at the elaboration of sugar; such an hypothesis is erroneous—it has been practically refuted by the experience of every man who has been in Puerto Rico, Colombia, or Margarita. I have not the smallest doubt remaining on my mind, that the sugar plantations may be cultivated by free labourers in every part of the West Indies; I mean by the slaves being converted into free labourers, and by land being given to them at a low rent. The precise plan upon which this great work should be effected in the colonies of different powers must depend on local causes, which the wisdom of a government only can direct. By the prudent execution of such a measure, the slaves may become useful and happy members of society; and I am convinced, that the planters will ultimately find emancipation to be their true interest, and that the wealth and commerce of the West India colonies will be amazingly increased by a policy at once humane, liberal, and just.

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CHAPTER X.

Prison Discipline in the Spanish Colonies—The Presidios or Galleys of Spain and Puerto Rico—Moral and Physical Degradation of their Inmates—The Criminal Presidio—Its Inadequacy as a Place of Punishment—Remarks on the Impolicy and Injustice of punishing Soldiers for Offences purely Military by Confinement in Presidios—Degrading Punishments destructive of Military Spirit and Virtue—The Correctional Presidio of Puerto Rico—Its evil Effects on the Morals of those confined in it—Description of the Jail at Port Mahon in Minorca, and of the Prisons of Majorca—Affecting Cases illustrative of the Operation of the System—View of the Improved System of Prison Discipline adopted in the United States—Effects of Solitary Confinement—Classification of Prisoners—Enforcement of Labour in Silence—Description of a Prison in Philadelphia—Prison of Baltimore—Attainment of the Ends of Punishment by these Establishments—Great Decrease in the Number of Re-committals—Saving of Expense to the Public—Proposal for adapting the American System to the Spanish Colonies—Plan detailed and recommended.

In taking a general view of the Spanish colonies, my attention has been forcibly drawn to the state of the prisons and prison discipline. I have long considered this sub-

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ject to be one of paramount national importance, and one that deserves and imperatively calls for the serious consideration of government. The accounts which I read of the improvements made in prison discipline in England and the United States of America, induced me to turn my mind particularly to this subject. I have investigated personally every thing connected with the regulations and internal economy of the prisons and galleys of the Spanish colonies, and of the Peninsula; and no language can express with sufficient force the horror and disgust which I feel, whenever my mind reverts to the scenes of human misery and degradation which I have witnessed within their walls. I can only say that they exhibit one vast panorama of every species of vice, depravity, and misery that can degrade human nature.

The presidios (or, according to the usual phraseology, the galleys) of Puerto Rico, are divided into two departments. The first, which is the criminal galley, is for the punishment of the greater offenders,—for men who have committed murder and robberies in Spain, or in the island of Cuba,—and also for soldiers belonging to the regiment in garrison of the city of St. Juan, who have offended against military law, viz., by insubordination to their superiors, neglect of duty, desertion, habitual intoxication, quarrelling, and all the train of offences inseparable from a body of men where the restraint of rigid discipline is not generally practised, and where they have too much intercourse with the inhabitants, the lower orders of whom are immoral in the extreme. Offenders are generally sentenced to this place of punishment for a term of from three to ten years, and, under aggravated circumstances, to re-committal for life. The second place of punishment is the correctional presidio, (or galley,) where persons, generally natives of the island, are sentenced for

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terms varying from a month to a year, for petty offences and misdemeanours. As these are separate establishments, I shall proceed to examine them apart,—most happy if I should be so fortunate as to impress the government of Spain with the same complete conviction which they have indelibly impressed on my mind, of their perverse tendency. I shall therefore commence with the presidio for greater offences.

Whoever for a moment seriously contemplates a presidio, must be forcibly struck with its inadequacy as a place of punishment, and with the state of moral and physical degradation to which it invariably subjects its wretched inmates. The villain who has committed deliberate murder, the homicide, the highway robber, the domestic thief, the incendiary, and the political delinquent, the perpetrators of every variety of crime of which human wickedness is capable—every grade of offence, every shade of guilt, from the highest to the lowest, are blended and promiscuously associated together. The hardened, incorrigible offender, who has been committed for numberless murders and robberies, who has reached the highest scale of moral depravity, is thrust into the same place of confinement with the novice in crime, with the young in years, and inexperienced in guilt—with him whose heart fluttered, and whose hand trembled on the commission of a first offence, who was only on the verge between vice and virtue, and who might yet be snatched from ruin by proper treatment. The only difference observable in the punishment of these convicts, so widely different in their moral delinquency, is in the duration of the punishment, —the term of years of their sentence. Their moral and physical degradation is the same; they are alike exposed to the public view as criminals of the same stamp; they all drag a chain; they work together; they eat and sleep

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together; they have continual intercourse with each other; they all march forth in the morning to the public works, exhibiting by their filthy and squalid appearance all the extremes of human misery, clanking their iron chains to excite the compassion of the spectators, and uttering expressions in their wickedness or despair, revolting to the ear of modesty. They are escorted by a guard of soldiers. They work or loiter out the day, little interested in the performance of a task which is stimulated by no hope, and carries with it no reward. They only watch for a favourable opportunity to elude the vigilance of the guard; and should they escape, they are sure to find an asylum among the people, who look on them with compassion, and forget their crimes in the contemplation of their sufferings. They too receive news from their friends and accomplices who are at liberty, and who spare no pains to favour their escape. At sun-set the convicts are marched back to the prison through the town, exhibiting again the same scene—clanking of chains, profanity, and wretchedness. The rooms where they sleep are generally so crowded as to produce an atmosphere physically unwholesome, and disgusting in a high degree; and at the same time adapted to promote the debasement of every moral sentiment, and inevitably to destroy all the sensibilities of our nature, which doubtless many of the unfortunate criminals who are committed for misdemeanours, or minor offences, must once have possessed. Young lads for the first offence, perhaps for concealing the value of two dollars of goods from the custom-house officers, share the same dark fate, and are mingled indiscriminately with hardened and aged villany. Their food is bad and scanty, so that the vigour of the most robust is soon reduced, and sickness and disease prey upon their physical strength. The administration of their miserable

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rations is as corrupt as cold, unfeeling avarice can make it. Those who supply the provisions purchase them by wholesale of the worst description; and by that villanous system of peculation which too often pervades public employments when not filled by honourable men, they deal them out to the convicts, diminished in weight and measure, while they make government pay at the retail prices; thus preying on the subsistence of the wretched prisoner, and defrauding government by a system of knavery which deserves the severest punishment the laws can inflict. I am sorry to state that such is the case; but such will continue to be the practice, as long as the overseers of these establishments are not selected with a special regard to the nature of their duty, with reference to their intelligence, their moral and religious character, and their reputation for benevolence as well as firmness. They should not be left to their own discretion, but be surrounded by a chosen body of inspectors, and act constantly in the presence of under officers selected with a due regard to probity, who would act as checks, and feel it their duty to report any malversation in regard to public money or abuse of power. It may well be submitted to the calm judgment of impartial and feeling minds, whether the exposure of a few months, weeks, or even days, much less years, to such company, and under a corrupt and tyrannical administration such as I have just described, is not sufficient to repress and annihilate every virtuous emotion in the bosom of man, and to subdue the feelings to a life of guilt, of suffering, and degradation.

The convicts, accommodated with a blanket merely, sleep on the bare ground; they soon learn to brave exposure, and to disregard privation; they are at once objects repulsive to the senses, and present a deplorable exhibition of moral depravity. The generally acknowledged corrupting

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tendency of the presidios, their imperfect structure, their defective regulations, and shameful administration, preclude any partial remedy being applied with any hope of success to such great evils. They must be new-modelled, newly organized, and their inmates classified with scrupulous exactness; they must be administered on more humane, more honest and philanthropic principles. So notorious is the demoralizing nature of these institutions, so generally do those liberated from them come out more vile and corrupt, and more skilful in the various modes of depredation than when they entered—without shame, feeling, or remorse,—that they may be termed the schools of crime, the seminaries of vice, where villains are tutored and instructed to sally forth and prey on mankind. If the fact were carefully examined, (and it is well worth attention,) it would most probably be found, that of all the assassinations and highway robberies committed throughout Spain, three-fourths, if not the whole, are perpetrated by men who have been inmates of presidios. Were the amount of injury which Spain sustains in one year calculated—by depredations on property by robbers, and the amount of labour lost by those who are consigned to presidios, (without taking into account the ultimate consequences on the moral feelings of the people in general, which are great beyond the possibility of arithmetical calculation,) it would probably amount to ten times more than would be the expense of institutions where punishment would be inflicted on the guilty, and by which thousands might be brought back to society, who are now its scourge, its terror, and its reproach. How many wretches who are now turned out, or who escape from the presidios, (which takes place almost every day,) without a trade, without the means of subsistence, and with the marks of infamy and crime stamped upon them, might, by proper

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and judicious regulations, be sent forth with industrious habits, and become again useful to their country and honest fathers of families! As the presidios are at present conducted, no prudent man would confide in, or give work, or even a night's lodging to a man who had emerged from five or ten years' residence in one;—he would dread lest in the midnight hour, the man to whom he had afforded hospitality should rise and plunge a dagger in his heart, and rob and burn his house, in recompense for his charity. Therefore, even if a man should come from a presidio with honest principles, which I believe is a thing *almost* impossible, he would be considered (at least in the Peninsula) as a thief, in consequence of the general and well-grounded public opinion, that none can come out of them but such as are confirmed villains. He would be refused every succour, and if not previously a thief, would be forced to become one, in consequence of the proscription of society, and in obedience to that great immutable law of self-preservation which is born with man. But, if the man who has had the misfortune to be condemned for a misdemeanour or petty crime, and who preserves still a spark of probity in his bosom, is thus driven to desperation, I may say forced to commit crime, by the operation of the laws that should have saved him;—what must be the effect on a mind already corrupted and depraved,—upon the man who when the term of his punishment expires, is thrown among society like a ferocious beast of prey—naked, without a trade, without the means of subsistence, shameless, hardened, abandoned, avoided by mankind, without a home, or a friend on earth? Hating the world that abhors and persecutes him, he flies to the woods or mountains, he joins the first band of freebooters he meets, and in the fit of desperation, or at the first call of necessity, he will sally forth from his hiding-place, to rob, and probably to murder, the first unfortunate

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traveller that may fall in his way. The wide world, thenceforward, is his scene of depredation, and he considers all mankind his enemies. Perhaps after years of adventure and crime, he is again taken and committed to a presidio, where he will not fail to preside as an accomplished professor in the science of depredation. And thus villany is perfected and perpetuated.

But it is not alone the individual who is condemned to a presidio, that is perverted and ruined by its operation. If the convict happens to have a wife and family, they too share in his punishment; they become the innocent victims of a father's or a husband's crime, although they may have had no knowledge of, or participation in it,—although they may abhor even the idea of it. They not only lose the protection of the arm that should toil for their support, but they are pointed out by their neighbours as a tainted family, as criminals, as persons unworthy of the sympathies of their fellow creatures. The poorest rustic of a Spanish village would scorn to marry the daughter of a man who had been condemned to the galleys; it would be considered as a stain never to be washed away. Thus the infamy of this punishment extends widely its influence in society, and carries shame, and misery, and despair, to many a virtuous bosom,—perhaps to many a noble mind.

This is but a very feeble delineation of its effects on society; the reality is still more distressing, more terrible, and more general than is commonly supposed by those who view things superficially; its poison may be observed to mix deeply in social life, and its venom is not less deleterious because the effects are slow, and often unperceived; for they are sure and inevitable; they completely undermine the social fabric to the very foundation. I am persuaded that there are few men who have suffered

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all the miseries of want, and escaped from the gallows, so utterly wicked and corrupt as to return by choice to their old delinquencies, if taught to subsist by labour in prison, if they had the means of earning an honest subsistence provided for them on their egress from it, and if they were not marked by a stamp of infamy as persons to be avoided by their fellow men through life. But the presidios, as they are now regulated, so far from fostering any latent seeds of virtue, or placing the convict in a situation where he may earn a subsistence, are only calculated to augment every day the number of criminals of the worst description, and to destroy for ever the most remote prospect of amendment.

Perhaps this is one of the most important subjects that ever occupied the attention of a government; for few other causes tend more powerfully to influence the prosperity or decay of national wealth and power. With a system of punishment, of which the inevitable effect is to foster and perpetuate, and constantly to augment a population of thieves and assassins, no system of finance can be carried into full operation—no government can be efficiently established in authority. Only let us suppose that five thousand persons are discharged yearly from a presidio: we have thus at least four thousand assassins, bathed to the very lips in vice, let loose on society; and in the course of a century the progression in crime would exceed all calculation. By a reference to those countries where a well-regulated system of prison discipline has been established, and followed up with perseverance, it will be found that it has contributed more to banish crime, and promote industry, than all the penalties ever invented for the same object. The uniform experience, for a series of years, of the prisons of England and the United States, where sanguinary penal codes, after having been for ages in

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operation, have yielded in practice to the more rational and humane substitution of hard labour, restricted diet, solitary confinement, and judicious classification, furnishes unquestionable practical evidence that the energies of the law in the suppression of crime, are most potent and efficient when directed with a constant view to the moral faculties of our nature, and when imbued with that spirit which seeks to restore, in order that it may safely forgive. The great object of the institution of civil government is to advance the prosperity and to increase the happiness of its subjects. The agents of government, from the captain-general down to the turnkey of a prison, should be the fathers of the people; and it may surely be ranked among the duties incident to this paternal care, not only that those who are guilty of crime should receive the punishment due to their offences, but that no pains should be spared to remove the causes of offence, and to diminish, as far as possible, every source of temptation and corruption. This is precisely what I would bring under the view of government, by demonstrating the condition of the men condemned to the presidios of Puerto Rico; a class whose increasing numbers and deplorable moral and physical situation loudly call for the effective moral co-operation of every individual interested in the welfare of his country; for all are, I assert, collectively and individually interested in the question.

But if the punishment of the presidio applied to civil crimes be so injudicious in its application, and so highly pernicious in its effects, how much more injudicious and unreasonable must it be when applied to offences of a nature purely and exclusively military! With the most painful sensations I have observed, that the majority of the convicts condemned to the presidios of Puerto Rico, are soldiers who have committed crimes either in Europe

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or America; the greater part of them offences purely military, without any mixture of moral depravity. I cannot reconcile to my feelings, or give the approval of my understanding, on any principle of justice or utility, to this amalgamation of civil crime with military offence. The soldier that might abandon his guard, or who in a moment of passion might so far forget himself as to utter a disrespectful expression to a superior, use violence towards a comrade, or commit some other breach of military duty, might abhor the thought of murder or robbery, or any moral crime; his mind, perhaps, might be as pure, and his heart as good, as any man's in the regiment. How dreadful, therefore, how unjust, how impolitic would it be, to condemn to the same degrading punishment the brave and honest-minded soldier, who would shed the last drop of his blood in defence of his king and country, and who would view a mean action with horror, with the villain who would rob or murder without scruple or remorse, in whose bosom the love of country or the feelings of loyalty never existed! The reformation of the criminal in this enlightened age being considered one of the principal objects of punishment, surely all facilities for retrieving his character should be extended in a peculiar manner towards the man whose moral feelings are not debased, but who, alive to all the sensibilities of honour, had erred from the weakness of the understanding, and not from the perversity of the heart. The severity of the military laws, when inflicted on this class of delinquents by condemning them to a presidio, is, in my humble opinion, entirely misplaced. It cannot be defended on any principle of justice, nor can any excuse be offered for its cruelty. Reformation in such a place, and among such associates, can never be accomplished; in place of its acting on the soldier as a place of punishment for

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a breach of military law, or as an example to others, it becomes the school of crime where bad morals are taught him, bad counsel given him, and bad example set him. Nothing can be expected from such a system, when applied to a certain class of military crimes, but the increase of offences, additional expense to government, a demoralizing effect on society, and the degradation of the noble profession of arms.

I beg here to offer a practical example of the injustice and inexpediency of condemning soldiers to the presidio for military offences. I was last year president of a court martial, ordered to assemble by command of the captain-general of Puerto Rico for the trial of a soldier of the regiment of Grenada, which was then in the garrison of that island. The crime with which he was charged, was a military offence of an aggravated nature,—" having absented himself from his guard without leave." The charge was fully substantiated in every point to the satisfaction of the court. The prisoner was called up, that he might have an opportunity of offering anything he had to say in exculpation. He did not deny the offence with which he was charged, but said that he had left the guard only for a few minutes in order to visit his sweetheart, of whose fidelity he entertained suspicions. He solemnly called heaven to witness that he had no intention of abandoning his guard. With tears trickling down his manly cheeks, and a countenance beaming with honourable feelings, he implored the clemency of the court. In the agony of despair he entreated not to be degraded by being condemned to the galleys—he would prefer to be shot. He said he had served the king fourteen years; during which time he had never been punished for an offence, never reprimanded, or placed in arrest. He appealed, in the confidence of

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an honest mind, to the officers of his regiment who were upon the court, to attest his good and hitherto irreproachable conduct. An unexceptionable character was given him by his officers, both as a soldier and a man. Every member of the court felt the deepest sympathy for him, and would have given any consideration to save him from the punishment that military law denounced against the breach of its regulations. It was an extraordinary case; I never till that moment had fully reflected on the unjust and pernicious practice of applying the galleys to military offences, when there was no degree of moral turpitude mixed up with them. I perceived on the one hand the rigid and inexorable severity of the military law, which left no choice to the court; on the other hand, I felt convinced of the inevitable destruction which its application would carry to the bosom of a man untainted by the immorality of crime. Humanity, justice, every feeling of the heart, every conviction of the mind, pleaded in his behalf; one general sentiment pervaded the court, to make an effort to save this man at all hazards. Contrary to our prescribed duty, and the king's regulations, we took upon ourselves the weighty responsibility of sentencing him to solitary confinement, confiding for the approval of this sentence in the generous feelings of the captain-general, who has ever been distinguished as the soldier's friend. The sentence was approved by his excellency, and a worthy soldier was thereby saved from an ignominious punishment,—a punishment that would have associated him with the robber and the assassin, in a place where his noble spirit would have been subdued and broken,—where, feeling himself debased, he might speedily have been initiated into the vices and crimes of the wretches who surrounded him; for it would require more philosophy and virtue than could be ex-

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pected from uneducated men, to resist, for a series of years, every temptation to crime, in a place where their proud spirits are deprived of every hope by the degradation into which they are plunged. The soldier thus rescued from utter destruction, is this day an ornament to his regiment, and an example to his comrades. This single man was saved; but many examples have come under my observation, where soldiers, for crimes where there was no degree of moral turpitude, have been condemned to a life of misery and infamy.

But let us examine in this place what effect the application of the galleys as a punishment produces on the soldier, and observe what becomes of him when he has been released. From all the observations that have been made—from the result of all the information I could obtain on this interesting subject, it appears that, at the expiration of his sentence, the soldier condemned to a presidio comes out an outcast of society. In the natural course of things, he is compelled to resort to crime for his support, impelled by the same causes which I have already stated as operating on other criminals confined to the presidio. Can it, I repeat, be consistent with the true and genuine spirit of justice, that offenders of this character, in whom there does not appear a shade of moral turpitude, should be condemned to the infamy and severity of a punishment which must inevitably tend to perfect the work of moral destruction and degradation, to sink them in corruption, to deprive them of every honourable feeling, to expose them to the public gaze as criminals of the deepest dye, and to fix them in all the hardihood of villany? Is it possible that military men in authority should so long have looked on with indifference, and beheld the good soldier condemned to irredeemable perdition, without stretching out an arm to

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save him? I am aware of the imperative necessity of strict discipline and implicit subordination in the army, without which, indeed, an army would be a continual source of rebellion, and be more dangerous to the sovereign it served than formidable to a foreign foe. I am decidedly of opinion that the smallest breach of military duty should be punished; but it is also my conviction, that it would be better, more humane, and more consistent with sound policy, to shoot a soldier for a military offence, be it ever so trivial, than to degrade and ruin him for ever by consigning him to the galleys. I feel persuaded that it would be highly judicious to place military crimes under a proper classification, whereby soldiers for infractions of military law where no moral turpitude was discernible, should be condemned to solitary confinement, and labour entirely apart from convicts more morally perverse, and more criminal. This opinion I submit with great deference to superior judgment, as one not unworthy of investigation—as one that may be put in practice with every prospect of utility. The soldier who committed an offence purely military, might be made to endure solitary confinement according to the nature and extent of the offence; severity might be diminished in proportion as he evinced contrition for his fault, until he was finally restored to his companions in arms without contamination of his moral character. By such measures, rigidly but judiciously enforced, many a good soldier would be saved to his country. Those soldiers, on the other hand, who should so far degrade their profession as to perpetrate deliberate murder, rob those it would be their duty to defend, or commit any crime of moral baseness, should undoubtedly be condemned to undergo the same punishment as other criminals, and be classed accordingly, and rendered for

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ever incapable of re-entering the honourable profession of arms. For no employment under a government is more care required in the selection of honourable minds than for the army. The soldier is the guardian of the life and property of his fellow citizens, the bulwark of his country in the hour of danger, and the safeguard of the altar and the throne. If men who have been, I may say, educated in a presidio, have arms placed in their hands, with the king's uniform on their backs, what confidence can be placed in their honourable fulfilment of their duty? Will they not upon every favourable opportunity plunder and assassinate their fellow-citizens? Will they not desert to the enemy on the day of battle? Will they not sell, or ignominiously deliver up, the post they had sworn to defend? Will they not taint the young soldier, and be the certain agents of introducing vices and crimes destructive to discipline? In such men revolution will always find ready instruments—such men will not scruple to be apostates to their religion, traitors to their king, and enemies to their native land.

The Spanish service is not the only one where soldiers are punished in a degrading manner for military offences; but the fact does not render the system more defensible on principles of reason, or more judicious and politic in practice. In the British army the system of flogging the soldier, and inflicting on his bare back, in the presence of his officers and brother soldiers, a severe corporal punishment of from 50 to 999 lashes,* is to be lamented and condemned. It is a punishment degrading to manhood; it effectually breaks the proud spirit that would face the cannon's mouth without flinching. The soldier who possesses those feelings of honour which he

* The maximum, by a recent regulation, has been limited to 500 lashes.—Ed.

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should possess pre-eminently over other men, can never again raise his head after suffering the debasement of flagellation. Many are the instances that have occurred within the scope of my own observation, where soldiers who had been flogged for a first offence, (very often a trifling one,) have from that moment lost all shame, and become confirmed drunkards. The man who has once the feeling of self-degradation, can never again assert the dignity of a manly mind. Corporal punishment, by its degrading consequences, hardens and vitiates the heart, and renders men ever after insensible to the finer feelings which prompt to elevated ideas, and to generous conduct. The barbarous custom of flogging has yielded in the British army to the more rational, politic, and humane system of solitary confinement, with proper restrictions in diet and labour. A most beneficial change has been effected; crimes have diminished in the army; the crime of drunkenness, to which the soldiers of northern climes are peculiarly addicted, has been checked; and that salutary reformation has been produced which ought to be the ultimate aim of all punishment. As I have already said, by classifying the crimes and offences of soldiers, as well as those committed by any other description of men, and condemning the delinquents to labour and solitary confinement, the most pleasing results may be expected. Thus the convicts will be put to work and treated according to their disposition and behaviour; their capacities for useful service will be ascertained, habits of industry will be acquired, moral precepts will be implanted, and suitable places be obtained for them, either in the army or otherwise, where they may have an opportunity of becoming useful members of society. But if by a system of indiscriminate severity hope is shut out for ever from the mind of the best man, already oppressed by the pain

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of having offended against the law, his understanding will be darkened, and he will be rendered callous to his future fate. On the other hand, let the culprit's mind be sustained with the hope that good conduct and reformation may again bring him within the pale of society, and every good feeling of the heart and energy of the mind will be incessantly exerted to prove himself worthy of indulgence. Such is the bent and disposition of human nature, and such the feelings that should be promoted by every wise legislator.

The distinction made in all the penal codes between crimes and misdemeanours, is well marked; the degree of moral guilt in the former, which is not generally observable in the latter, renders a corresponding difference necessary in the plan and nature of the punishment. The man who steals, which implies moral debasement, deserves some mark of infamy; while the soldier who commits a breach of discipline, but who would scorn to do a base action, is also deserving of punishment, necessarily perhaps more severe for the preservation of discipline, but certainly not so degrading in its character. Although some loss of reputation must be incurred by the infliction of any punishment, yet indelible disgrace ought to be attached to those only which are inflicted for crimes implying moral depravity. To mark this distinction both in the mind of the criminal, and in the view of the public, different places, as well as different treatment, should be assigned for the several classes of offenders. The soldier whose conduct has been without moral stain or reproach, is worthy of some consideration. Let him be punished, let him be severely punished,—but not degraded, not destined to a fate more terrible than death itself,—to a place among robbers and assassins.

A good man, who loved his country, would tremble at

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the very idea of being the means of bringing a person to justice who had offended against the laws, knowing that condemning him to the galleys would be making him a criminal for life, and perhaps involving in his ruin an unfortunate and innocent family. How different would be the case, how dissimilar the feelings on this subject both of the accuser and the magistrate, were these places of reformation and labour, where the delinquent might be made a better man than when he entered. The conscience of the philanthropist would be at rest; the humane and upright judge would cheerfully do his duty, and no crime would escape without a corresponding punishment.

Viewing the presidios in the most favourable light, they are a heavy expense to government. Supposing there are 30,000 persons in the galleys and prisons of the Spanish dominions, their expense to government, at twelve quartos, or four-pence sterling, per day, which is allowed them in money, without taking into consideration the expense of wardens, turnkeys, guards, the capital invested in edifices, their repairs, &c., will amount to the immense sum of 780,000 dollars annually. But we must also take into consideration the immense produce which the labour of these culprits, rightly applied, would afford to the nation. The maintenance of the prisoners in the galleys of Puerto Rico alone cost the government in 1830, 16,800 dollars, of 4*s.* 6*d.* each.

I have been thus diffuse on the subject of the criminal galleys, and their relation to the punishment of military offences,—indulging a hope that the subject may arrest the attention of enlightened statesmen, who are able and willing to ameliorate the institutions of their country. I shall now proceed to make a few observations on the nature and tendency of the correctional galleys; and I believe I shall have very little difficulty in proving

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their pernicious tendency on the population subjected to them. I will go farther—I feel no hesitation in declaring that no better means could have been devised for establishing academies for propagating vagrancy, robbery, and vice, and for effectually contaminating an innocent agricultural population. Fortunately for the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, Divine Providence has provided them with a climate so mild, and a soil so fertile, that the wants of nature are supplied with little labour or exertion; and consequently, they have not constantly before them the principal temptation to crime—necessity, which too frequently is the case in less favoured climates. Crimes of an atrocious nature seldom occur; deliberate murder is very rare, and highway robbery is a crime unknown in this happy island.

Those committed to the correctional presidio of Puerto Rico are men and lads who have been convicted of petty offences or misdemeanours; some for having stolen a game-cock, or a bunch of plantains; others for quarrels originating in gambling or love affairs; and not unfrequently persons are committed to the presidio through the private pique of the petty magistrates of the villages, who avail themselves of their authority to exercise a paltry vengeance against an unfortunate family. Nothing can be more pernicious than this wicked exercise of the law. These men do not reflect, that while they thus gratify a most demon-like passion, they injure society in its most tender point, by throwing the honest countryman into a society where his morals will become tainted, where he is taught the way to crime, and rendered callous and shameless. Perhaps by this first commitment of the rustic to the correctional presidio for a venial fault, be the term long or short, they lay the foundation for a future robber and assassin. The number of persons confined at a time to this place of punishment, is seldom less than eighty, and

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sometimes exceeds 150. They are promiscuously associated; they are confined for the term of a month or a year, as it may please the magistrate who condemns them. Their food is scanty; half the money allowed by government for this purpose never reaches the unfortunate convicts in the shape of provisions; the same malpractices prevail here as in the other prisons and presidios: it is one continued system of peculation. At the expiration of their sentence, these convicts are allowed to return to their villages, carrying along with them every mark of shame and reproach; if they come to the presidio innocent of crime, they return to their homes adepts in vice, and they are ever after looked upon by their countrymen and by the authorities, as men of dubious character, who have suffered for an offence. Seldom has the observation failed in fact, that the individual who has been once committed to the presidio, for the smallest offence, even for a domestic broil, has been re-committed very shortly after for a greater offence; for by being continually looked on as criminals, they become so at last in reality. I have observed several young men who had been liberated after confinement for a slight offence, speedily sent back, and have recognized them in the presidio a second and a third time. Those unfortunate men among them (and many of them are of this class,) who have got a home, a piece of land, and a family to support, are thus compelled to abandon their all. They leave the land which provided subsistence for their wives and families uncultivated; and the innocent children subsist by begging, or by committing depredations on their neighbours. Many cases have I known where fathers of families have been committed, without the vindication of justice, or the excuse of it. I again repeat, that no establishment can be better calculated to contaminate an agricultural population than the correctional

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presidio, as it is now regulated and administered. Its regulations are defective, its administration is corrupt, and as applied as a punishment for crimes or misdemeanours, it is totally inefficient and pernicious. If applied to the vagrant, he is not taught to work; if to the vicious, he has no example of morality set before him. In place of reforming, it tends essentially to harden the novice in delinquency; it is injurious to the morals of the inhabitants of the country in an eminent degree; it makes vagrants of the once industrious, teaches every vice, and perverts completely the honest simplicity of the untutored mind. It is a heavy expense to government, without producing any of the great ends of punishment—any reformation of the criminal, or any benefit to society. The promiscuous association of convicts, however light may be the shades of their offences, must be productive of the worst results. Its pernicious tendency has been exemplified, in the investigations made at different periods into the origin of crime, by the philosophers and sages of every country. In the prison discipline of England and the United States, it is one of the principles and groundworks for the reformation of men convicted of crime, that they should be confined separately by night, and that in the day-time they should hold no conversation by word or action with each other; for it has been invariably observed, that whenever the prisoners were allowed to associate with each other, and communicate their feelings and ideas, however severe their treatment, and hard the work they had to perform, they became more hardened and depraved, reformation was never effected, and crimes increased both in number and atrocity.

The great objects of prison discipline, it is admitted by

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all intelligent writers who have discussed this subject, are—First, labour; so that the prisoner may contribute to the expense of his maintenance. Secondly, moral reformation; so that, on his discharge, he may renew his intercourse with the world, with a determination to renounce the errors of his past life, and become an honest man. Thirdly, punishment to an extent sufficient to deter others from the commission of crime, and thus promote the safety and welfare of society. The experience of the prison discipline, both in England and the United States, has established the conclusion that sanguinary laws, and cruel and vindictive punishments, answer no valuable purposes as instruments of terror; and that crimes are less numerous when the whole system of penal legislation is conducted upon principles of humanity, and with a reference to the nobler motives which can be made to operate upon the human mind. Keeping constantly in view the well-being of my adopted country, I have already presented to the Spanish government an account of the state and discipline of the prisons and penitentiaries which I visited in the United States of America, all of which I examined with attention; and I am persuaded, that both the system and method practised with so much utility in that country, might be adopted and pursued in every part of the Spanish dominions with the best consequences, making only those variations which must naturally suggest themselves to the intelligent mind, arising from difference of climate, and the character of the inhabitants.

I shall here subjoin a few observations which I have made on the few prisons I have been able to visit on my route from Mahon to Madrid. The subject to the unreflecting mind must be dry and uninteresting; but to the en-

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lightened and truly patriotic men who this day direct the helm of government, I am persuaded it will afford matter for earnest attention.

Having performed my quarantine at Mahon, in the island of Minorca, I thought I might be able to follow up my investigations on the state of the prisons and galleys of the Peninsula, in order to be able to add some practical proofs of their pernicious tendency, and of the absolute necessity of the government taking some steps towards their amelioration. I went to visit the royal jail of Port Mahon, which is a private house rented by government, in consequence of the old prison situate under the town-house being excessively damp, so much so that it killed a great many unfortunate persons. When I arrived within a hundred yards of the prison, it was easily distinguished by the faces of the inmates being seen through the iron bars of their windows; around was a crowd of persons assembled, conversing with the prisoners, apparently their friends and relations; and they also begged alms of the passengers. I asked the jailor, on arriving at the door, to show me the place where the prisoners were confined; he conducted me by a winding staircase to a suite of subterraneous rooms or vaults, where the prisoners were promiscuously immured. Three or four rooms without doors, or any division whatever, seemed to be the dormitory for all confined, without any distinction of age or crime. The iron gratings which gave light to these vaults, were on a level with the street. The door of a small yard was open, to which the prisoners had free access. On some dirty old mats strewed on the floor, which were the only beds I could see, I perceived a pack of greasy cards, which showed that they amused themselves in a manner not the most likely to improve their morals. Some of the prisoners had

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threadbare blankets; and others, as I was informed, slept on the cold ground without any covering. Stones served them for pillows. None of them had any employment. Idleness and misery were stamped on their squalid countenances. They surrounded me when I entered; some asked alms; others complained of the hardship of their case. There were about fifty prisoners of all ages, from an old man of eighty to a child of eleven years, and incarcerated for almost every species of crime. There was a man in a dungeon, who had treacherously stabbed an American sailor a few days before. He was confined in a dirty dark hole without any ventilation. A fetid smell came from it which I could not support, and I turned away from it with horror and disgust. The walls of the prison had not been whitewashed, according to all appearance, for ages; and indecent figures and obscene words were pourtrayed with charcoal on the windows, doors, and walls, and appeared to have been the amusement of those prisoners who knew how to write. The greater part of the prisoners were confined for smuggling; some were there for debt, and for domestic quarrels; and there was a child of eleven years confined for murder! All these prisoners lived and slept in the same room: the unfortunate debtor was confined in the same place with the smuggler, and with thieves and assassins. My attention was attracted by the appearance of the child of eleven years, confined for such an atrocious crime. His countenance was that of innocence; I could not trace in it any marks of depravity. I asked the jailor how it was that such a child had been guilty of such an offence, and why he was thus confined among old offenders? In reply, he told me the following story.

This child, it seems, was an orphan; and he lived in the country with a farmer. Three Sundays previously, the

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family went to church, and left the boy in care of the house,—as had often been done before, because he was a remarkably good child. The son of a neighbour, of the same age, went over to the farm to play with him. There was an old rusty musket in the corner of the kitchen, which had not been cleaned for many months; unfortunately it happened to be loaded, without the knowledge of the boys, but it was not primed. They went through their exercise alternately as soldiers; one stood in front of the other and gave the word of command. They snapped the gun several times; and at last, unhappily, the shot went off, and the neighbour's boy fell a corpse at the feet of his astonished but innocent destroyer. Such was the great terror of the boy of being hanged, as he afterwards confessed, that he dragged the dead body to the well, and threw it into the water. In the evening the family returned, and every thing appeared tranquil; no suspicion of what had occurred existed. The neighbouring family missed their boy at sun-set, on finding he did not come home as he was accustomed to do. In vain did they call his name—no answer was made. With the anxiety of a parent, the boy's mother went to the farm-house to inquire from his companion what had become of her son. His answers were vague and confused, and suspicion of something being wrong naturally arose. By threats of punishment he was brought to acknowledge the fact; he told every thing, and the corpse of his friend was found in the well, with the head and face all shattered by the shot. The young culprit was immediately conducted before the judge; the notary took down his declaration, which was clear and consistent. He was thence conducted to the public prison, and confined, as I have already said, with every class of criminals, there to await the tedious course

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of a criminal trial. Although the judge was well aware of the innocence of this child, yet he could not do otherwise than condemn him to be incarcerated in a place where every moral sentiment must be for ever blasted.

That this unfortunate child was innocent when he entered the walls of the prison there can be no doubt whatever, and his affliction on being confined shows that he had the sensibility which is to be expected at such a tender age. The neighbours of the prison assured me that during the first week of his imprisonment, his cries and lamentations both by day and night would have softened the hardest heart,—such was the horror inspired by his misfortune. But when I saw him he appeared to be in a state of stupid melancholy, and no doubt he was gradually getting reconciled to his deplorable situation. To the person who reflects, this case will require no commentary; it illustrates the pernicious tendency of confining in the same place the young and the old—the innocent and the guilty. The child I have just mentioned will most probably be condemned to the galleys from three to ten years, where he will learn every species of crime, and go forth on the world, in the flower of his years, in the spring of life, mature in wickedness, and most probably will add another victim to the many whom an erroneous system of punishment has lost for ever to their country.

It is not in the power of the judges or governors in Spain to soften or to meliorate the hard fate of the prisoners. It is indispensably necessary that there should be a total change in the buildings,—in the treatment of the prisoners,—and in the management of the funds by which they are supported. I asked the jailor here what salary he was allowed; he answered that he only

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received about tenpence sterling a day, with which he had to maintain himself and family. Is it not very obvious, therefore, that he must defraud somebody in order to maintain his family? I will ask, whom is he to defraud? The answer is very simple: he will rob the wretched prisoner of his scanty ration. He will exact contributions from those who wish to see their friends and relations; for the smallest bribe he will tolerate gambling, and wink at every species of excess. He can augment or diminish the punishment of the unfortunate prisoners as it may suit his interest or caprice,—thus perverting the course of justice, which should be upright and invariable. He may make it press with unequal severity perhaps on the poor debtor, who has neither money nor friends, nor any other support except hope in the God of mercy, whilst the thief and the assassin, who may have secured their booty, and have friends and companions at large, meet with all the comforts and indulgences which such a place can afford. Perhaps a jailor thus poor and degraded, without a character to support, unprincipled, and inhuman, from the inducement of gold would favour the escape of the greatest villain that ever infested society.

I also learned in Mahon, that every year great numbers of children are confined in jail and sent to the galleys for having stolen a bunch of grapes, induced to do so from the great poverty which reigns generally in the island. I was likewise informed that fifty of the natives of the island, who had been sent to the correctional galleys of Majorca for minor offences, in a month after their term of punishment had expired and they had returned to their homes, were again apprehended for greater crimes, and sent back to the galleys much worse than when they left them. Such is, and must be, the

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result of the galleys. Such is the melancholy prospect which they offer, and which must deeply affect all who love their country and have one spark of feeling in their bosoms.

Notwithstanding the deplorable state of the prisoners confined in the jail of Mahon, it was much worse before the present governor made some alterations in favour of the prisoners; but it is too deplorable still—too disgraceful in every point of view for a civilized country. I shall abstain from offering a description of the vice and wretchedness which I have observed in many other of the galleys and prisons of the Peninsula. The details would make the coldest hearts feel compassion for their fellow creatures, nor could they be contained in a volume. I shall only therefore add a few observations which I made on the galleys of Majorca.

The prisoners in the galleys of Majorca are confined at night in a dark and narrow prison, consisting of two long paved rooms on the ground floor, without any light or ventilation, and excessively damp. They did not appear to be proper for the abode of human beings. On either side of these vaults benches of stone extended their whole length, leaving a narrow passage between them; on these benches the prisoners lay on straw. They all sleep together, without any separation whatever. At nightfall they are locked in, after coming from the public works, which gives them time till the following morning to communicate mutually their ideas, to gamble, and to form plans for escape,—which they frequently attempt, as I discovered by the number that had chains to their legs. The greater part of the prisoners were confined for smuggling. I observed many youths of tender age among them; there were several of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen years, and there was one who had not seen eleven summers. I asked

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the overseer what crime this unfortunate boy had committed; he told me that he had been detected in concealing a pound of tobacco which he had smuggled. My attention was next drawn to an old man with a head as white as snow, who appeared to be less worn out by years than by the deep grief which was visible on his countenance. From his mien and appearance it was easy to perceive that he had seen better days. His eyes were fixed upon the floor, and on hearing that I inquired of the keeper who he was, and what crime he had committed, he raised his eyes quickly from the ground; a blush,—it was not the blush of crime but of indignation,—suffused for a moment his pallid cheeks, and passed over like a transient cloud. It was the effort of nature; a tear rolled down his cheek, which he brushed away with the cuff of his coat, and hid himself, to avoid curiosity, among the crowd of prisoners. The keeper told me that this venerable old man had been committed to the galleys because the revenue officers had discovered in his house six pounds of tobacco; two years and a half he had been already labouring at the public works. During the same period his aged consort had been in the public jail for the same offence; and their three daughters, the fruit of their union,—orphans, I may say,—in order to avoid penury and its consequences, temptations to prostitution, took refuge in the House of Mercy.* In order to satisfy myself as to the truth of this melancholy story, I went to the jail, and there found the unfortunate mother of these girls in a state of misery and affliction not to be described by words. She was nearly destitute of clothing, filthy, and surrounded by a number of persons as wretched as herself. I next went to the House of Mercy, and on

* The House of Mercy is an establishment for the poor, where they work and are fed and lodged.

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making inquiries, the three girls were pointed out to me at work. Thus were these unfortunate, innocent girls, at once deprived of their father and mother for having six pounds of tobacco found in their dwelling.

I shall abstain from making any reflections on this melancholy case; but I cannot help appealing to the justice and humanity of the government, and asking if the laws of Spain authorize a sentence so unjust and cruel? No! I cannot believe it; even the government is probably not acquainted with the proceedings of subaltern authorities, who thus bring disgrace on the laws of their country. It is not within the sphere of my duty to call to an account the conduct of those magistrates or public functionaries, who perhaps may conceive that they do their duty by sacrificing entire families to the interests of the revenue laws wrongly understood. I wish to God that the dictates of justice and the love of country may be the only motives which prompt them to these inexorable proceedings!

From a sense of delicacy, I shall abstain from presenting a picture of the jail of Palma, and its inmates, where I saw many unfortunate men who had been, year after year, waiting their final sentence, and who showed by their ragged clothes and pale faces all the extremes of human misery. A fear of hurting private feelings, or wounding national pride, prevents my pen from drawing another picture: suffice it to say, that the same system of avaricious peculation, the same insensibility, the same scenes of misery, the promiscuous intermixture of innocence and guilt, of age and youth, which I have observed in all the prisons and galleys of the Spanish dominions that I have visited, are in full force in the galleys and prisons of the island of Majorca. The picture which I have here given of the galleys and prisons is not equal

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to the reality. Could I exhibit the number of families that are ruined—the children dispersed over the face of the country, deprived of their parents—the profligacy, idleness, and vice which are engendered—the robbery and peculation which are carried on in these establishments, the most incredulous would be thoroughly convinced of the mal-administration and deplorable state of the prisons throughout the whole of the Spanish dominions, the baneful effects of the present system on the mass of society, and its inevitable tendency to make the people vicious and idle, and consequently the government poor and impotent.

I have thus attempted to give a brief outline of the nature and effects, as they have appeared to me, of the prisons and presidios of the island of Puerto Rico, and of some other parts of the Spanish dominions,—an outline which, I feel, gives but a faint picture of the reality, and embraces but a small extent of the attendant evils. This description, with very little modification, but on a scale of greater magnitude, may be applied to the prisons and presidios of every part of the Spanish dominions. I shall now enter on the more pleasing task of recording the great national advantages which other countries have derived from a system of prison discipline conducted on principles which aim at reformation. I do not speak from hearsay—what I here relate I have seen with my own eyes. I have visited those prisons; I have examined the interior of their cells; I have observed the convicts during the hours of labour, of instruction, and devotion; I have seen and examined the quality and quantity of the provisions allowed them; and have in-

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quired into the nature and administration of the funds by which they are supported;—and I can affirm, without exaggeration, from the appearance both external and internal of the edifices, the order and cleanliness observed in every part of these establishments, and the deportment of the prisoners, that I could have supposed that I had been in a well-regulated and well-governed manufactory, in place of a prison. I speak not of one single prison; I visited all the principal public establishments of prisons, penitentiaries, and houses of refuge, in Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut, and throughout all of them the same good order prevailed, with some little variations in the plan of discipline. Long accustomed to view a prison as a loathsome place of guilt—as the asylum of the worst and most abandoned of mankind, I felt lost in surprise and admiration the first time that I walked over these places of confinement. My admiration increased at every thing I beheld; my mind was so agitated by conflicting emotions that I could scarcely believe the evidence of my senses.

The views of the legislature are ably supported by the choice of wardens selected to superintend these establishments. The wardens of the prisons and penitentiaries in the United States are not of that class from which men are generally selected in other countries to fill this important trust. They are all men of considerable education; they are chosen for their probity, their zeal in the public service, their humanity, and religious principles. Neither the influence of friends, nor the still more powerful influence of money, would have any weight in the appointment of a person disqualified by the want of a suitable education, or noted for immorality of conduct. I shall, perhaps, never again visit any part of the United States. I have no connexion of interest in that

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country, nor can I be supposed to have any selfish view in praising its institutions; but it is due to truth and justice to say that I have found all the wardens to be most intelligent and communicative, and they seemed to take a deep interest and feel a sincere pleasure in imparting every information relative to the prisons and their inmates. Every part of the prisons, even to the kitchens, was freely thrown open for inspection, with that confidence which is inspired by the conviction that every justice is done to the unfortunate convict, and that no fear need be entertained of the discovery of cruelty or fraud from the most minute investigation. The situation of warden is looked on as a most honourable charge. They are liberally and punctually paid; their lodging within the prison is spacious and comfortable; and, besides having a character to sustain in society, they have a deep interest in the faithful discharge of their duty in order to hold their situations, which they can only do by the most upright and exemplary conduct. The under keepers are also men of good conduct; and they likewise are most liberally paid, and therefore they have the same powerful interest in acting in concert and to the same end. They are subject to the continual supervision of a board of managers, which is composed of the most enlightened men in the community, above want, animated by a love of country, and true friends to humanity. There are corresponding committees all over the extent of the republic; they communicate to each other their discoveries and improvements in the suppression of crime in their respective provinces, observations of the effects of different species of punishment on prisoners, &c.; and they publish annual reports, laying before the public an exact account of the number of persons committed, the classification of their offences, their ages and countries, the expenses of the prisons, the

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sums that may have accumulated from the work of the prisoners, and the numbers who have been reformed and discharged. Thus is this enlightened plan of prison discipline sustained, protected, and improved, in a manner that exalts the national character, and banishes crime by the operation of the most beneficent principles.

Before I proceed to give a description of the prisoners, and the system of discipline universally followed in the United States, I conceive it will not be foreign to my purpose to offer the reader an extract from the writings of that excellent divine and profound philosopher Dr. Paley, in the chapter of his work which treats of crimes and punishments; showing the little hope that he entertained at the period when he wrote of the practicability of the reformation of prisoners, and the view which he then took of that mode of punishment which has since been adopted with such peculiar and extraordinary advantages, both to the criminal and to society, in England and the United States. This learned writer, after making solid observations on the inefficacy, and inequality, and injustice of the penal laws in awarding punishments, says, " The end of punishment is two-fold—amendment and example. In the first of these, the reformation of criminals, little has ever been effected, and little I fear is practicable. From every species of punishment that has been hitherto devised, from imprisonment and exile, from pain and infamy, malefactors return more hardened in their crimes, and more instructed. Of the reforming punishments which have not yet been tried, none promises so much success as that of solitary confinement, or the imprisonment of criminals in separate apartments. This improvement augments the terror of the punishment; it secludes the criminal from the society of his fellow-prisoners, in which society the worse are sure to corrupt the

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better; weans him from the knowledge of his companions, and from the love of that turbulent, precarious life in which his vices had engaged him; is calculated to raise up in him reflections on the folly of his choice, and to dispose his mind to such bitter and continued penitence as may produce a lasting alteration in the principles of his conduct."

The opinion of this learned writer respecting the impracticability of effecting the reformation of the prisoners, fortunately for humanity has proved erroneous; for the experience of the prisons of the United States proves incontestably that the reformation of old and hardened offenders has been effected by solitary confinement and labour. On the general causes of crime, Dr. Paley fully coincides with the opinion of every other judicious writer on the subject, and he offers his opinion as to the best means of applying a remedy. "As aversion to labour," says he, "is the cause from which half of the vices of low life deduce their origin and continuance, punishments ought to be contrived with a view to the conquering of this disposition. Two opposite expedients have been recommended for this purpose—the one solitary confinement with hard labour, the other solitary confinement with nothing to do. Both expedients seek the same end, to reconcile the idle to a life of industry: the former hopes to effect this by making labour habitual; the latter by making idleness insupportable: and the preference of one method to the other depends upon the question, whether a man is more likely to betake himself of his own accord to work who has been accustomed to employment, or who has been distressed by the want of it. When jails are once provided for the separate confinement of the prisoners, which both proposals require, the choice between them may soon be determined by experience. If labour

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be exacted, I would leave the whole or a portion of the prisoner's earnings to his own use; and I would debar him from any other provision or supply, that his subsistence, however coarse and penurious, may be proportioned to his diligence, and that he may taste the advantage of industry together with the toil. I would go further; I would measure the confinement, not by the duration of time, but by the quantity of work, in order both to excite industry, and to render it more voluntary. But the principal difficulty remains still, namely, how to dispose of criminals after their enlargement. By a rule of life, which is, perhaps, too invariably and indiscriminately adhered to, no one will receive a man or woman out of a gaol into any service or employment whatever. This is the common misfortune of public punishments; that they preclude the offender from all honest means of future support. It seems incumbent upon the state to secure a maintenance to those who are willing to work for it; and yet it is absolutely necessary to divide criminals as far asunder from each other as possible. Whether male criminals might not, after the term of their confinement was expired, be distributed in the country, detained within certain limits, and employed upon the public roads, and females be remitted to the overseers of country parishes, to be there furnished with dwellings and with the materials and implements of occupation; whether by these or by what other methods it may be possible to effect the two purposes of employment and dispersion, well merits the attention of all who are anxious to perfect the internal regulation of their country."

The judicious theories of this celebrated writer have been of late years not only put in practice, but they have been much improved and enlarged, and the results have exceeded the most sanguine hopes of the warmest philanthropy. All the difficulties which had been appre-

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hended by him have been overcome, and the system of prison discipline which he recommends with so much misgiving as to its practicability, is now established on the sure basis of practical experiment, and promises to be of more utility to the human species than, perhaps, any of the other discoveries of philosophy.

The experience of all the prisons in the United States proves beyond a doubt, that imprisonment with seclusion and labour as a punishment, will diminish the crime for which it is inflicted, but that imprisonment without seclusion will increase and multiply crime; therefore this now forms the great basis of prison discipline. In all the states where prisoners were promiscuously confined, it was found that offences increased both in number and atrocity. The incalculable benefit arising to society from solitary confinement as a punishment for offences, no longer rests on theory; it has been tried practically under every variety of circumstances, on offenders of all descriptions, and its results have been invariably useful, both in the reformation of the wicked, and in the efficacy of the inducements held out to the novice in crime to become industrious and sober.

It has been observed in all countries, that most of the crimes perpetrated are attacks on property, the greater part arising from idleness and vice—few from absolute necessity, but prompted by the desire to avoid labour, and to enjoy the fruits of the industry of others. By placing the offenders in confinement, separating them from the associates of their crimes, and making them labour for their support, they are forced to reflect that by industry they might have subsisted as respectable men, and enjoyed the society of their fellow-creatures, without the necessity of committing depredations on them. In regard to those who have committed still more atro-

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cious crimes, by the operation of violent passions, not duly corrected by education, and not restrained by religion or a fear of the law, it has also been found that solitude and labour will correct their vices. Under this view, solitary confinement operates in the double capacity of punishment and reformation, and sends the criminal forth into society an altered being. As an example it has proved more efficacious than any other remedy, as is proved by the decrease of crime since its establishment in the United States, although the population of that country is a mixed assemblage of all the nations upon earth, where robbers, and swindlers, and malefactors, of all tongues, and from all parts of the globe, find an asylum.

When imprisonment and labour were first substituted for corporal punishment, the evil of confining prisoners without classification and separation became evident. It was not found sufficient that the sexes should be kept separate; there were other evils arising from promiscuous intercourse which set at defiance every attempt at improvement in the morals of the prisoners. They soon became reconciled to the horrors which the idea of imprisonment naturally conveys to the mind, for they enjoyed society among themselves; they listened to each other's stories and adventures, they learnt each other's crimes, and they invented new acts to be practised on the wide theatre of the world, when let loose from confinement. Instead of furthering reformation, even labour with promiscuous imprisonment proved inefficient, for evil communication was still active to corrupt, knowledge was taught in the practice of crime, and proselytes were made of the young and inexperienced who were confined in the same prison for slight offences. The classification of prisoners, therefore, became necessary, and was the next great step towards improvement in prison discipline. The young

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and the old were confined to separate cells; the novice was separated from the practised criminal; and, according to the greater or less depravity manifested by the offenders, the punishment was increased in severity, and *vice versâ*, until amendment and thorough reformation were effected,—at least to all appearance, for the heart of man is unfathomable. Nothing has proved more beneficial than the classification of criminals, (which in England has been multiplied to more than fifteen times;) for it is a well-established fact, that the association of any number of convicts together, whether novices or adepts in crime, is pernicious to their morals, and destroys every hope of their reformation. Prisoners confined together, and enjoying each other's society, become callous, shameless, and hard-hearted; they are certain to be perverted, but they cannot be reformed. It has been observed in the prisons of the United States, that, as long as the prisoners were confined promiscuously, although they were compelled to work, yet the only benefit that arose from their labour, (and that is small in the scale of national utility,) was its contributing to their own support. Their morals were invariably tainted, and they were sure to be re-committed, in a short time after their discharge, for more aggravated offences. The great and praiseworthy attention paid to this most important subject by the prison societies in America, and the continual increase of crime, led to the adoption of solitary confinement with labour—not excessive labour, but labour proportioned to the age and habits of the convict. This system produced almost immediately a most salutary effect, in reforming the prisoners and diminishing crime.

The system of prison discipline now approved as the best method, and generally pursued in the United States, is absolute solitude during the night, with joint labour

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during the day, but without any communication with each other by word or sign. Meals are taken at the same table, or in their cells, but with the prisoners so disposed as not to see the faces of those opposite them. Religious instruction on Sundays is received in a body, and a school, in the same manner, is held twice every Sunday; both in school and in church the same prohibition of intercourse is strictly maintained. A full diet is provided of meat, vegetables, and bread, of the best quality to be found in the market; comfortable beds and bedding are furnished, in very narrow but well-aired cells; and the utmost attention is paid to cleanliness in every department of the prison. Visitors are admitted to inspect the establishment, but they are on no account allowed to speak to the prisoners. Their work is uninterrupted during the day, except by their meals, and is generally contracted for by mechanics who find the materials. Such is the strictness with which the rules are enforced, that I have been assured that men working together for years did not even know each other's names; for they are all called by the number of their cells. On their discharge, the prisoners receive each a sum not exceeding three dollars, without any reference to the sums they may have earned by their work during their imprisonment.

Nothing can be more imposing than a prison conducted on these principles. Order, obedience, sobriety, religious instruction, industry, and solitary reflection, are attained to the prisoner, and economy to the country, by this humane and enlightened system of prison discipline. Absolute solitary confinement without labour or exercise, bodily or mental, has been found not to answer the purposes either of example or amendment; for it is calculated to undermine and destroy the physical and moral powers of the prisoner, and to disqualify him from earning

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his bread at the expiration of his sentence. It is, moreover, impolitic, because, when persisted in for any length of time, it tends to harden rather than to reform. Besides these strong objections to its adoption, except for a short time under particular cases and extraordinary circumstances, it carries with it another disadvantage; it produces great expense to the public; for as the prisoner does not contribute in any way to his support by the produce of his labour, it leaves the community to suffer all the burthen of the crime and its punishment.

A prison, the most perfect of its kind perhaps in the world for solitary confinement and bodily labour, is now almost completed near Philadelphia. I went to see it, and the impression it has left on my mind will never be effaced. A space of several acres is enclosed with a stone wall, twenty feet high, and two feet thick. This inclosure is entered by a massive gate, under a pile of buildings which occupy the centre of one side of the square, and which contain the warden's and keepers' apartments, the hospital, store rooms, &c. In the centre of the square, there is a large room built on a level with the ground, in the shape of a heptagon. From the sides of the heptagon, aisles run parallel to each other, upwards of 100 yards long; on each side of which are cells, with a small court attached to each, for the prisoners; the gratings of their windows, through which they receive their food and light, looking towards the aisle or passage. It is so constructed, that the warden, seated in the centre of this room, has a full view at one glance of the seven aisles and their cells, as well as of the gate at the entrance. Not a stir, a whisper, or a movement can take place in any part of the prison, without his hearing or observing it. When completed, it will be a most magnificent and commodious establishment. When I was there, there were three aisles finished and full of prisoners;

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and such had been the good effects of the plan adopted, that the legislature of Pennsylvania had granted a large sum of money for the purpose of constructing 400 additional cells, which were in a very forward state. The silence throughout this prison was such, that one would have supposed there was not a single human being within its walls. The discipline observed is worthy of particular attention, and I extract the following details from the prison reports.

When a convict first arrives, he is placed in a cell, and left alone without work and without any book. His mind can only operate upon itself; and it has been generally found that but few hours elapse before he petitions for something to do, and for a Bible if he can read. No instance has occurred in which a petition has been delayed beyond a day or two. If the prisoner have a trade which can be pursued in his cell, he is put to work, as a favour. When a Bible is allowed him, it is also considered as a favour in reward of penitence and good conduct. If he have no trade, or one that cannot be practised in his cell, he is allowed to choose one that can, and he is instructed by one of the overseers, all of whom are master workmen in the trades they respectively superintend and teach. Thus work, and moral and religious books, are regarded and received as favours, and are withheld as punishments. Intemperance and thoughtless folly being generally the causes of crime, a prison is mostly peopled by those who have seldom reflected seriously; hence the first object of the officers of this institution is to turn the thoughts of the convict inwards upon himself; and to teach him how to think in solitude is a powerful aid to reformation. This mode of punishment, bearing as it does with great severity upon the hardened and impenitent felon, is eminently calculated to break down his obdurate spirit.

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Such is the admirable construction of this prison, that the purposes of cleanliness do not demand the entrance of an attendant, or the egress of the prisoner. His food is furnished, without his seeing the hand that brings it; and a complete inspection of his cell is made while the prisoner can neither hear nor see the approach of the keeper: all is silence and solitude. Solitary labour may be performed in the small court attached to each cell, and there is no danger of communication between the prisoners; they are separated by massive walls, and the least noise, or even whisper, is heard in every part of the prison. This system is simple, and the object of it is reformation, by leaving the prisoner to meditation on his past crimes. In this terrible solitude, days, and weeks, and months pass away, without his seeing a human being, or hearing a human voice; but as the severity of the punishment is increased, the duration of it is diminished. When the prisoner has once experienced the operation and influence of the principles of this institution on a subdued spirit and contrite heart, he learns and feels that moral and religious reflection, relieved by industrious occupation at his trade, comforts and supports his mental and physical powers, divests his solitary cell of its horrors, and his punishment of much of its severity. The salutary impressions thus made, instead of being destroyed by the sneers and taunts of the companions of his former crimes, are cherished and nourished by the officers of the prison, who, as I have already observed, are men selected with a regard to their moral conduct. No prisoner is seen by another after he enters the walls. When the years of his confinement have terminated, his old associates in crime, perhaps, will be scattered over the face of the earth, be in prison, or in the grave; and the reformed prisoner looks forward from the penitentiary with a hope that he may pass the remainder of his life, after the expiration of his

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or very ill employed, unless properly directed to pursuits which will improve the intellectual powers, and thus prevent the mind from sinking into apathy and cherishing the perverted conceptions already existing. The experiment here made warrants the assertion, that convicts are not only capable of intellectual culture, but that they gladly resort to the means of instruction as a relief from corroding reflections, and that this diversity of employment, so far from infringing on the amount of labour, gives them more alacrity, and consequently excites to greater industry.

It has been generally observed, that since the institution of schools in the prisons of the United States, there has been less vice and immorality, and that the aspect of the prisoners has been greatly improved; the dark scowl of despondency, or desperation, having changed into the more confiding look of hope, and the more cheerful expression of contented employment. No blank, vacant visages appear; on the contrary, they exhibit the marks of active thought. It has therefore been practically proved, that moral instruction may be usefully blended with labour, in producing the desirable work of effectual reformation.

All the prisons of all the States which I have seen, are conducted nearly on the same principles as those I have attempted to describe; I shall therefore only add a brief view of the discipline of the state prison of Connecticut, which appears to me worthy to be a model for imitation in every respect, and the one most suitable to Spain. From the locking up at night till the dawn of morning, all the convicts in this prison, except those that are in the hospitals, are confined in separate cells; and the cells are so arranged, that a centinel on duty can preserve entire silence among 300 persons. The space around the cells being open from the ground to the roof in front of four stories of cells, in a building 200 feet in length, it fur-

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nishes a perfect sounding gallery, in which the sentinel is placed, who can hear the least noise or whisper from the most distant cell. From the time of locking up at night to the time of unlocking in the morning, which in winter makes more than half of the twenty-four hours, the prisoners are thus secured from evil communication. From the time of unlocking the cells in the morning, about twelve minutes are occupied by the moving off of the convicts, in a military fashion, in companies of thirty-eight, with an officer to each company, in perfect silence, to their various places of labour. At the end of ten minutes, every man is in his place; this is the case with the keepers, as well as the prisoners.

If a keeper leaves his place, even for ten minutes, a substitute must be called to fill it during his absence. If a convict has occasion to leave his place, there is a token provided for each shop, or for a given number of men, so that from this shop or number, only one convict can leave his place at a time. During the hours of labour the convicts are never seen moving about the yard promiscuously, or assembled in groups, nor even two conversing together. All is order and silence; nothing breaks on the ear but the busy hum of constant industry. The hours of labour vary with the seasons of the year. When the hour for breakfast comes, almost in an instant the convicts are all seen marching in solid, silent columns, with the lock-step, under their respective leaders, from the shops to the cells. On their way to the cells they pass the cookery, where the food having been made ready is handed to them as they pass along; and at the end of ten minutes from the time of ringing the bell for breakfast, all the convicts are in their cells, eating their breakfast silently and alone. One keeper is enough to preserve order and silence, and the others are free from care until the hour of labour returns,

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which is at the expiration of about twenty-five minutes. Then almost in an instant the whole body of prisoners are again seen marching as before to their places of labour. On their way to their shops they pass through the chapel and attend prayers. The time from breakfast to dinner passes away like the time for labour before breakast; all the convicts being found in their places industriously employed, in silence. A pin might be heard, if dropped on the floor. The time allowed for dinner is filled up in the same manner as the time assigned for breakfast; and the time for labour in the afternoon, precisely as the time for labour in the morning. When the time for evening prayer arrives, at the ringing of a bell, all the convicts, and all the officers not on duty elsewhere, are seen marching to the chapel, where the chaplain closes the day with reading the Scriptures and prayer; after which, the convicts march in perfect silence and order to their cells, taking their suppers as they pass along. In about the space of twenty-five minutes from the time of ceasing their labour, the convicts have attended prayers in the chapel, taken their supper in their hands, marched with it to their cells, and are safely locked up for the night. This is the history of a day; and with the variation of the Sabbath being exempt from labour, and employed in worship and reading the Bible, it is the history of a year.

Divine service is performed in the corridor of the cells every Sunday. The prisoners remain in their cells; they neither see nor communicate with each other; they do not even see the preacher, but his words reach them in the depth of their solitude. Nothing can be more impressive and solemn than the word of God delivered in this manner. The convicts sitting alone, without seeing or being seen by any human being, there is nothing to abstract or divert their thoughts from the truths which are ad-

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dressed to them. When they hear the words of the gospel they are alone, and when the sound of the minister's voice dies away on their ears, they are still alone to ponder and reflect.

The food allowed the prisoners in all the prisons of the United States, is of the best quality to be purchased in the market, and the quantity is sufficient for the most robust man enduring hard labour. There is no embezzlement of money, no pilfering of the prisoners' rations; the least abuse would be reported, and the guilty would suffer immediate and certain punishment. The food consists of one pound of beef for each man, 1½ lb. of good home-made bread, potatoes and vegetables. Molasses and tea or coffee are given for breakfast, with mush, which is a kind of bergoo made of Indian corn-meal, and is both a healthy and nutritious diet. Their clothing consists of good coarse cloth; their shirts are white and clean; their hair is cut close, and every possible attention is paid to cleanliness both of persons and things. The prisoners look healthy and cheerful, and there is no appearance of misery or dejection about them. Their cells, which are seven feet long by three feet two inches wide, in place of exciting disgust, exhibit an appearance of neatness and cleanliness that surprised and pleased me. They are well aired and lighted; stoves run through the passages, and communicate warmth all over the building; their beds are good and comfortable; and were it not that I knew before-hand that I had entered a place of punishment for criminals, I should have supposed that I was viewing the interior of a well-regulated range of barracks. A solemn silence reigned over the whole establishment, every part of which corresponded with the whole.

The great object of criminal punishment seems to be almost completely attained by these establishments, which vie

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with each other in zealous endeavours to promote the great end of their institution. They produce reflection in the mind of the prisoner; they prevent the contagion of receiving or communicating bad example; they effectually prevent escape and combination among the prisoners, for they are as one prison within another.* Labour produces health, active habits, and industry; it improves the mind as well as the body; and by the produce of his industry maintaining the criminal, the nation has not to bear the burden of supporting the penalty of criminal conduct; and lastly, it effects an object superior to all these, for it produces reformation, and sends the condemned criminal forth into society, a useful, in place of being a rotten member, —a source of practical utility, in place of being a taint and a contagion.

The beneficial influence of these institutions on the mass of society is therefore no longer doubtful. Whatever view we take of them, they carry conviction of their utility and practicability to the mind. The system of solitary labour and solitary confinement, as practised in the Philadelphia penitentiary, might be applied in the Spanish Peninsula with good effect to the more heinous crimes, and to incorrigible offenders; while the plan of the other prisons, with separate confinement by night and joint labour by day, might be usefully employed in the punishment and reform of less guilty men; a prison, therefore,

* If a prisoner should escape from his cell, which is almost impossible, he would still find himself in another larger prison, the space around the cells being shut in by massy gates, with a vigilant centinel, and behind that the guard-room of the keeper. But even should a prisoner, by a combination of circumstances and efforts almost superhuman, escape through all these barriers, and arrive outside the gate, he would still have to scale a wall twenty feet high; this could not be done but by the help of ladders, &c., which he could not make or conceal in his cell, and which, not having any communication with any body on the outside, he could not get introduced; therefore escape may be considered impossible,— while from the old prisons convicts escaped by hundreds.

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uniting both species of discipline, would, I am convinced, answer every purpose of retributive justice and radical reformation; and thus by classifying the prisoners, classifying crimes, and proportioning the severity and duration of punishment to the nature and enormity of offences, great good might be effected. The prisoner, from absolute and uninterrupted solitude, might be brought, on exhibiting signs of repentance and reformation, into the second grade of punishment—promiscuous labour; and thus, by a long, cautious, and most necessary term of probation, the criminal might be returned to society, broken of his vicious propensities, and accustomed to subsist by honest labour.

Having thus presented a cursory view of the prison discipline practised in the United States, I shall now add some calculations from official records, in corroboration of the important results which I have stated. With respect to the reformation of the prisoners, no more satisfactory evidence can be produced in favour of the new method of prison discipline over the old plan, than by a reference to the re-commitments of prisoners for offences. When the old plan of promiscuous confinement was followed, the re-committals in the New York penitentiary were one in every two prisoners; in the state prison of New York city, one in four; in 1817, in the penitentiary of Philadelphia, more than one in three. Now mark the difference in these prisons since the plan of solitary confinement and labour was established. In the prisons of Philadelphia, New Hampshire, and Auburn, the re-committals, on an average, are only one out of twenty prisoners discharged. The well-authenticated cases of complete reformation were in the prison of Auburn, 146 out of 206 discharged; and out of 600 prisoners discharged, there were only seventeen committed a second time, and none a third.

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The health of the prisoners is also in these prisons equal to that enjoyed, on a general calculation, by the most favoured villages of the United States, the number of deaths not being more than one per cent. of those confined, on an average of five years; while on the old plan, it was generally three, and sometimes six per cent.

Those who weigh national institutions merely by the money they cost, without calculating the saving in the long run to society, might perhaps make objections to the expense of these establishments, as a reason for not adopting them in the Spanish dominions. But so far from being expensive to government, it has been most fully and satisfactorily proved by the experience of all the prisons in the United States, that the work of the prisoners not only covers every expense of these establishments, but leaves a surplus revenue in favour of the state. It is only by forming comparisons that a true idea can be formed between institutions. The heavy expense the prisons were to the United States previous to the adoption of the new plan of discipline, is worthy of observation. In thirty-six years, the prison of Connecticut, where the number of prisoners never exceeded 100, was an expense to the state of 214,611 dollars, averaging yearly nearly 6000; in the years 1817, 1818, and 1819, the average expense was 12,192 dollars annually; while under the new regulations this prison leaves an excess in favour of the state, after supporting the whole of the expense of the establishment. The state prison of New York in twenty years, from 1803 to 1823, incurred an expense amounting to 381,302 dollars; in five different years the expense was more than 30,000 dollars each year; and the annual expense of the old prison at Philadelphia was 30,000 dollars; while at present the whole of these prisons support the

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prisoners out of the produce of their own labour, give a revenue to the state, promote industry throughout the county, and diminish crime.

The earnings of the 500 prisoners confined in the prison of Auburn, on the new plan, amounted last year (1832) to 39,933 dollars; and the expenses, including the pay of the officers, to 34,070; leaving a balance of 5863 in favour of the institution.

The whole expense of supporting 120 men, including the salary of the officers, in the Connecticut prison for one year on the new plan, was 5876 dollars, 36 cents. The income from the same number was 9105 dollars, 54 cents; and the state received into its treasury, from the labour of this small number of convicts, 3229 dollars.

The penitentiary of Baltimore, also on the new plan, besides paying the whole expense of supplying 317 criminals—amounting, for provisions, clothing, fuel, and other incidental expenses, to 18,796 dolls. 52 cents, together with 8100 dolls. 86 cents for the salaries of the officers, and 3522 dolls. 36 cents to the State, on account of loans made for the erection of buildings, &c.,—realized a nett gain of 9804 dolls. 16 cents; and in six successive years the earnings have greatly exceeded the expenses, so that the penitentiary had in 1830 an active capital of 90,000 dollars. This immense capital had accumulated from the labour of the convicts, at the same time that the prison had been paying interest to the state on money lent for the erection of the building; and this had accumulated too where the great business is weaving, which is not the most productive species of industry.

I have here cited only a few practical examples, to prove the great national advantages to be derived from these establishments, even in a pecuniary point of view, which is the least favourable of their aspects. In every

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other respect they are conducive to national happiness and prosperity beyond the power of calculation to demonstrate, or of imagination to conceive. If such favourable results as these are produced by this wise and humane system of prison discipline, in the cold climate and barren soil of North America, where fires and stoves are absolutely necessary the greater part of the year, and where warm clothing is required,—how much cheaper would such establishments be in Cuba and Puerto Rico, where the former are unnecessary, and the want of the latter is scarcely known—and in Spain itself, where they are not so imperatively called for, in consequence of the mildness of the climate! The benefit of such a system, however, must entirely depend on its wise and prudent administration, without which the best system will prove abortive, and the object it was intended to promote be utterly defeated. But if other nations have introduced and carried into effect these useful institutions, with such great advantage, why should there not be enough of virtuous patriotism, humanity, and perseverance in Spaniards to carry this system into effect likewise? I am persuaded there is nothing wanting but to give it a fair trial; and I pledge my existence that, if placed in the hands of men such as may be found in every town in Spain, who would do honour to their country, it will succeed beyond the most sanguine hopes. Puerto Rico and Cuba present great facilities for trying the experiment successfully; their fertile soil, producing such valuable crops, would not only repay the labour, but leave great funds which might be usefully employed in forming other establishments of public utility, and placing the convicts who should give proofs of reformation in a situation to make their acquirements useful. I really think that in those countries the convicts condemned to presidios might be advantageously em-

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ployed in agriculture, as a species of occupation that fortifies the body, employs the mind, and meliorates the heart. Few are so weak or so old that they might not contribute something to their support. The great object is that none should be allowed to indulge in vice and idleness.

I have thus endeavoured, in the first place, to present an idea, however feeble, of the present state of the Spanish presidios or galleys, and their consequences to society. In the second place, I have offered an outline of the perfection to which prison discipline has been carried in the United States of America; its powerful agency in diminishing crime in that country; its economy to the nation; and the incalculable advantages it diffuses over every part of society. It now remains to offer my respectful opinion in regard to the extent and mode in which this highly beneficial system may be applied to the Spanish colonies. I offer this opinion with the greatest diffidence in my own ability; at the same time that I am fully convinced of the paramount importance of the object. I hope, however, that the attention to the subject which these imperfect notices may promote, will stimulate other and abler pens to investigate the best mode of adapting the improvements of prison discipline to the Spanish nation. As man is moved by the same great principles of action in every quarter of the globe, in spite of national diversities and peculiarities, that system of discipline which experience has incontrovertibly proved to be so beneficial to other countries, cannot fail to produce correspondent effects in Spain, if care be taken to adapt the means and mode of application with a due regard to the customs and habits of the people, the nature of the climate, and the productions of the soil.

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A celebrated writer on prison discipline judiciously remarks, that "society is divided into two parts; those who by their industry or property provide subsistence for themselves and their families, and those who do not. The latter must of necessity draw their support from the former, either by depredations on property, which bring them under the cognizance of justice, or under the reality or pretence of pauperism, by levying a tax on public or individual charity." This last description of persons, to which the attention of government should be particularly directed, may be arranged in three classes:—1st. Those who can labour and are willing to labour, but who cannot find employment. 2nd. Those who can labour, but are idle from inclination, not from want of employment. 3rd. Those who are unable to support themselves, from being infants, from old age, or from infirmity bodily or mental. The first of these classes does not exist in the island of Puerto Rico nor in Cuba, for whoever is able and willing to work can there find employment, and that too of a most profitable nature. Nor does the last class prevail to that extent of misery and destitution which it does in Europe; for in the tropical climes the artificial wants of fire, warm clothing, glass windows, and other articles so absolutely necessary in northern regions, are scarcely known. Charity being a predominant virtue with these islanders, the aged, the infirm, and the sick, if destitute, are welcomed to every door. The second, or middle class, includes those who under the name of vagrants are placed in society on the verge between vice and crime,—vicious and idle enough to require the vigilant inspection of the police, yet not so palpably guilty as to justify the severer punishments denounced against the actual commission of offences. This last class are very numerous both in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Idleness, therefore, in these colonies,

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is the principal source of crime; it is the preparatory step to the perpetration of offences. The gambler and the profligate, who generally are idlers, produce the robber, the murderer, and the revolutionist. This description of vagrants, therefore, would most properly be the objects of coercive justice. It comprises a large portion of the free coloured population, together with a great number of adventurers from the foreign colonies, who have no specific means of gaining a livelihood, and a few white inhabitants of the island, who having no trade or occupation, and being too proud or too lazy to work in the fields or at a trade, make out a precarious livelihood by gambling. The establishment of a good system of prison discipline in these colonies, to separate, classify, and distinguish between the grades of offences, would, by punishing and reforming the guilty, and by making the vagrant and the idle work, present a strong inducement to the reformation of bad habits. With this view, and taking into consideration the climate, the character, and the propensities of the inhabitants of these colonies, and considering that they are peculiarly, and almost exclusively, an agricultural population, I would most respectfully submit the following plan, subject to those changes and modifications which might be found practically useful.

As the public advantage is the great object in the application of prison discipline to the Spanish colonies, I do not lose sight of that well-proved maxim of political economy, which recommends that the inhabitants of every country should dedicate the efforts of their industry to the production of those articles for which nature has adapted their soil and climate, as the most advantageous to them; for as the speculator would be involved in ridicule and ruin who should attempt to establish estates of

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the sugar cane or coffee plants in England, so it would be equally preposterous for the natives of the torrid zone to attempt to establish woollen manufactories, or to sow wheat or barley. Both find it their interest to produce those things most congenial to their soil, and to exchange them advantageously for articles which they have not. With these premises, I would recommend the selection of a large tract of land in the interior of the island, in a salubrious situation, on which buildings should be erected precisely of the nature and on the plan of the prisons of the United States, for solitary confinement during the night, and joint labour during the day. I would divide the establishment into two distinct departments, one for the confinement of those who might be convicted of vagrancy or misdemeanours, the other department for the punishment of crimes of greater magnitude. At present the prison alone of Puerto Rico, without including the expenses of the galleys, costs the government 7000 dollars yearly. This sum anticipated, together with the joint labour of the prisoners, would be amply sufficient for the construction of an edifice for a beginning; and the gains of the prisoners might be afterwards applied, deducting the expense of their maintenance, clothing, and the pay of the officers, to the improvement and enlargement of the edifice. Besides, a part of the prisoners might be occupied in cultivating the land, and planting provisions, which in four months would produce more than sufficient to maintain the whole number employed; and when the edifice should be completed, all the convicts of the island, not convicted of great offences, might be usefully employed in agriculture.

In Cuba and Puerto Rico, the ordinary price of labour is more than sufficient for maintaining a working man: on the lowest calculation, the product of one man's ordi-

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nary labour throughout the year, is sufficient to maintain twenty persons, while by cultivating plantains, it has been proved that the labour of one man, for the same period, would suffice to maintain 240 persons. I would only dedicate to trades, such as shoemaking, tailoring, &c. those convicts who from the nature of their crimes could not be allowed to unite in social labour: the work of a few convicts would suffice to provide the whole with clothes and shoes. I would preclude all kinds of manufactures, because the articles produced by them could be purchased cheaper than they could be wrought, and the produce of the land would be more productive, and might be exchanged for other necessaries to greater advantage. If the prisoners were employed in making roads, or cutting canals, which by facilitating the transportation of the produce of the land and merchandize from one part of the country to another, produce capital, by imparting greater value to the land through which they are made, I would levy a toll on those roads, or on that portion of the country or property so benefited by them, sufficient to defray the maintenance of the convicts whose labour was thus conducive in promoting public and private wealth. Large sums of money are annually expended by government in maintaining the prisoners condemned to the galleys, and those who are confined to the prisons, who produce nothing to the country, and contribute nothing whatever to their own support. They destroy their moral and physical strength in idleness, and the time which should have been employed in productive labour is wasted in vicious conversation with their fellow prisoners, or from the windows importuning those that pass the streets for alms, or offending by their obscene language the ears of modesty. I have already shown, that those men confined to the presidios and

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jails, both in the Peninsula and the colonies, are only a burden to government, in consequence of the want of true principles of prison discipline. The great practical levers of a sound system of prison discipline, are finding employment for the prisoners, the produce of which shall be sufficient for their support, and the just administration of these funds to promote the physical comfort of the prisoners; for in vain will moral reformation be attempted, if the unfortunate convict be covered with filth and rags; if his aliment be insufficient in quantity and quality; and if he see before his eyes continually objects of misery and disgust. Employment for every man that is able and willing to work may very easily be found both in Puerto Rico and Cuba; under these circumstances the number of those who are incapable of contributing to their own support is very small; and it is evident that when none are idle, the cost to government, at the worst, will be only the difference between the proceeds of convict labour and the expense of support. But as I have already said, the produce of the least productive labour of an individual is sufficient for his support, and therefore, making all proper deductions for forced labour, and for the disadvantages which inseparably accompany public institutions, labour properly and diligently conducted, and the proceeds honourably and faithfully administered, must relieve the government of all the expense attending the maintenance and custody of prisoners, together with all extra expenses attached to such establishments.

It is only necessary to form a calculation of the immense sums of money which the government disburses yearly for the maintenance of those confined in prisons and presidios, who produce nothing, to be convinced of the utility of the system I would propose for adoption. Every prisoner in Spain is allowed by government a

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daily stipend of twelve quartos, which sum, if properly administered, would be amply sufficient for his comfortable subsistence. The Spanish soldiers only contribute nine quartos each, or three-pence sterling, daily to their mess, and they have two abundant meals. It is true they are not allowed animal food as the soldiers are in some other countries, but as they are accustomed to more frugal fare than the peasantry of other nations, they suffer in this respect no privation; and this acts as a strong argument to prove, that in no country could these prisons be established on a more economical plan than in the Spanish dominions. But, at present, the prisoners purchase their food through the medium of the jailors, who consider half the money as their lawful perquisite; and thus the prisoners who might be comfortable and clean, exhibit every extreme of misery and filth.

If prisons on the plan of the United States were solidly established, and the system of supporting them faithfully executed and honourably administered, the great object of preventive justice would be fully attained. Numbers of the free people who are now idlers and vagrants, fearing to be committed to these establishments where they would be forced to work, would be taught habits of industry before they could become criminals. The utility of such establishments in all countries must be acknowledged, and they are still more loudly called for in islands where there is such a redundant population of free people of colour, who, from a variety of deteriorating causes, are at present prone to idleness and vice. The restraints of discipline carried into proper effect, would prevent effectually the association of the wicked, who form plans against society, and often set the authority of all government and law at defiance.

But this plan leads to an inquiry scarcely less im-

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portant than the discipline of the prison, namely, what is to be done with the convict or the vagrant after the term of his sentence has expired? To this difficulty I will endeavour to find a solution, which I believe will be found to be practicable so far as regards the Spanish colonies. When the convict's term of sentence has expired, without any possibility of corrupting influence, with the daily experience that labour can procure him a comfortable subsistence, receiving no precepts but those of religion, morality, and instruction,—and these inculcated not in the harsh language of reproach, but in the mild and firm language of advice, from men who take an interest in his welfare, and with the cheering prospect before him of regaining by honest industry and virtuous pursuits a place in society,—the offender must necessarily leave his place of punishment a better, a happier, and a wiser man than when he entered it. But these happy effects will be fruitless—it will be in vain that you have given him the skill necessary for his support, and rendered him anxious to labour, if no one will employ him, or if he is proscribed as an infamous person. His relapse will be certain and inevitable, and his depravity will be greater from the experience that reformation has not relieved him from distrust, want, and misery. To avoid this result, it is indispensably necessary to provide some means by which the convict may find employment and subsistence, in order to place him beyond temptation, to remove him beyond the sphere of his former associates, to confirm him in his newly acquired habits of industry, and to restore him to the confidence of society; for, at present, in Europe, no one would employ or receive a convict discharged from a prison or a presidio, any more than he would think of shutting up a mad dog with his children. In order to obviate this great difficulty, I would

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propose that after the convict's term of punishment has expired, every one that has been employed in agriculture should be indentured to some estate for six or twelve months, at a moderate salary, to make it a matter of utility to the proprietor,—the salary or wages to be paid to him at the expiration of the period of his indenture. By this means he would be subjected to another probation, which would prove highly advantageous, previous to his restoration to the confidence of society, and afterwards he would have no difficulty in finding employment. Agriculture would thus receive material benefit in a country where, in the natural course of things, the inhabitants must depend at a future day entirely on free labour for the cultivation of the soil.

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APPENDIX.

No. I.

A VIEW OF SPAIN AND HER COLONIES.

WHOEVER investigates the history of the West India colonies of England and France, will find that, for the last forty years, there has been a dreadful decrease in their population; and that, by the system pursued in those colonies, their agriculture has been almost ruined, and life and property rendered insecure. The extraordinary advancement of the Spanish islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, in agriculture, commerce, and population, within a few years, on the other hand, forms a striking contrast. But if we take into consideration the peculiar situation in which the Spanish colonies have been placed—continually menaced by the hostile attitude, and endangered by the example of the neighbouring republics,—at a distance from the mother country, which, suffering for a series of years under the effects of invading armies, and what is still worse, torn by intestine factions, could afford them neither succour nor protection,—even the enemies of Spain will not withhold a tribute of respect to the wisdom of that colonial policy by which they have been upheld, and under which they have flourished amidst the revolutionary wars and devastations which have prevailed around them.

In order to be able to form a true judgment of the present position of Spain and her colonies, we must take a retrospective view of them. We shall thus perceive what has been the colossal power of that empire, her extent and riches, the causes of her decay, and the moral and physical possibility of her regeneration under the influence of a wise and enlightened administration. If we take up a map of the world, and measure on it the immense extent of territory of which Spain was formerly mis-

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tress in every quarter of the globe,—if we count the number of ships of war bearing her flag which floated on the ocean,—the strength and discipline of her armies, which, like the Roman legions, were considered invincible,—her arsenals filled with all the materials of war,—her treasuries teeming with gold and silver,—and now look to her, stripped of her colonies and of her navy,—her finances exhausted, and the nation reduced to hold a second rank among the powers of Europe,—we shall find a salutary lesson and a warning for kings and statesmen. The superficial observer will feel lost in astonishment and wonder how so much wealth and power could thus have melted away. But empires, as well as the property of individuals, if badly administered, must fall into decay: the only difference is, that in the one case misery and ruin are entailed on a family, in the other on a whole nation.

Spain was one of the most extensive empires recorded in the history of ancient or modern times. Her territories extended over a space of which three-fourths were but partially explored. The sun never set on the vast dominions of the kings of Castile. Taking it on the whole, it formed an empire unrivalled in extent, and unequalled in power or riches, excepting by the British empire at the present day, which, by the preponderance of its vast naval power, has extended its conquests and formed colonial establishments in every part of the globe. The Roman, the British, and the Spanish empires, are the greatest on record. The Roman empire, which extended over Europe, Asia, and a part of Africa, has been swept away from the face of the earth. The classic land on which the seat of that empire stood, is now the cradle of superstition, and is enervated and degraded by vice and immorality. The British empire, enthroned in the ocean by which it is encircled and rendered invulnerable, has formed a chain of out-posts around the globe, to protect her immense mercantile depôts and colonial establishments. Well supported and protected by her powerful navy, she may defy the efforts of a world in arms; and so long as liberty and patriotism animate the bosoms of her sons, she will stand secure amidst the fall of nations and the crash of empires. The sceptre of Spain held its sway over the four quarters of the globe. In Europe she once held dominion over Holland, Belgium, and the most fertile provinces of Italy. In Africa she possessed the strong

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fortress of Ceuta, and on the coast of that continent the Canary Islands. In India she held the Philippine Islands; and she had the glory, under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, to add a new world to European civilization.

The Spanish empire has suffered exceedingly from the vicissitudes of revolution, from internal faction, from misgovernment, from the attacks of open, and from the intrigues of concealed enemies. By the loss of her colonies on the continent of America, Spain has, indeed, only been dismembered of territories which she could neither fully cultivate, nor colonize, nor protect, and which, by a continual drain on her population, impaired her vigour; and she would, perhaps, at last have ended by becoming a dependency of her colonies. But, although Spain does not stand in the commanding and invulnerable position of Great Britain, yet she can scarcely, like the Roman empire, be annihilated by external force. Although she was not prepared to meet the sudden shock produced by the revolt of her colonies, (any more than the colonies were prepared for emancipation,) yet she is still in a position to acquire more power by concentrating her native energies and resources, than, perhaps, she possessed at any former period. She possesses the most powerful means of reorganization and reaction, and may yet hold a high station among the greatest nations of the world.

Here it is necessary to pause and mark the territories which Spain was successively deprived of, and some of the leading causes by which those losses were produced. Holland, Flanders, Italy, and Portugal, were, one after the other, wrested from the crown of Spain. Rival nations, envious of her power, and alarmed at her greatness, worked incessantly on the feelings of ambitious men, and stimulated the pride of conquered provinces to raise the standard of revolt against a power which they could not openly subdue. Spain gave her enemies an advantage which they eagerly seized; for, by the conquest of America, although she increased the extent of her dominions, she weakened her power by diffusing it over an immense surface. Her adventurous sons, in their thirst for the precious metals at a period when the true source of riches was not well understood, despised agriculture, and in the search for gold and silver explored the most barren mountains of the new world. Abundance of gold and silver was found, but the nation became poor and the govern-

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ment weak in the midst of the treasures which poured in from the mines of Mexico and Peru. The navy, without which colonies cannot be supported, was neglected and fell into decay; hence the progressive decline of the opulence and power of the Spanish nation. Holland, after a bloody struggle, became independent. Portugal, a slip torn off from Spain, erected itself into a separate monarchy under the princes of Braganza. Portugal and Gibraltar, forming integral parts of the Peninsula, and belonging to Spain at a former period, would be of more importance to the Spanish crown than the whole of her former possessions in America, together with Belgium, Holland, and Italy.

But it was not the loss of all those territories, nor the blood and treasure expended in long and ruinous wars to retain them, that finally reduced Spain to a state of political insignificance. It was the French revolution that aimed a mortal blow, and struck the power of Spain in the core; for, although the French legions in vain attempted to reduce Spain to bondage, yet the principles of the French revolution did not fail to sow the germs of disaffection, and to nurture party spirit both in Europe and America. The minds of the inhabitants of the new world were poisoned by the introduction of French doctrines, which drove the happiest people on the face of the earth, surrounded by plenty, and governed by the mildest laws on record, into a premature declaration of their independence. This abortion of political speculation was brought about by the agency of other powers, who only bearing in mind commercial advantages badly understood, and mistaking the real condition and habits of the people they co-operated so powerfully to emancipate, sacrificed every sentiment of gratitude on the altar of cold, sordid, calculating interest. They injured Spain deeply—not irreparably; but they have, perhaps for ages, ruined South America, and sacrificed real to imaginary good.

It is only necessary to take a retrospect of the state of Europe at this period, the magnanimous conduct of Spain, and the unworthy recompense she met with for all her sacrifices, to cause us to detest the policy by which she has been ruined. Let us look back to the period when the whole continent of Europe lay prostrate at the feet of Buonaparte; when the yoke of despotism oppressed every living being from Lisbon to St. Petersburg; when

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England had not a foot of land on the continent of Europe on which to unfurl her banner, or a single port to receive her ships of war. It was at this moment, when England was the only power that had not recognized that extraordinary man who grasped at universal dominion as a legitimate monarch,—when every hope had vanished, and eternal slavery seemed to be the doom of the European continent, that Buonaparte resolved to enslave the world. Thinking by a bold stroke to accomplish his purpose, he took a fatal step, and committed a political error of such magnitude, that all the strength of his power could not remedy it, nor all the influence of his mighty genius counteract the consequences by which it was followed. He ordered a French army to cross the Pyrenees. It entered the capital of Spain, and by an act of the most barefaced and insulting treachery, the royal family were conducted prisoners to France, and a usurper was placed on the Spanish throne. The voice of the herald that proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte in Madrid, reverberated mournfully through every city, and town, and village,—through every mountain and valley of the Peninsula. From the Pyrenees to the columns of Hercules, there was not a single Spanish heart that did not respond with a cry of indignation and revenge; and most nobly did they redeem the pledge of their loyalty. The whole population, *en masse*, men, women, and children, the old and the young, rose with one accord to avenge the insulted honour of their nation, to wash away the foul stain of French pollution from the pages of their history. The sun which on the second of May, 1808, rose on the continent of Europe riveted in the chains of slavery, set that very evening with the first link broken to pieces, and steeped in the blood of the oppressors. The lion of Castile was roused by the call of loyalty and patriotism, and the roar which he sent forth from the capital of Spain on that memorable day, was heard at the farthest extremity of the earth. An unarmed peasantry overthrew the veteran legions of Buonaparte, and the heroes of Marengo and Austerlitz fell under the daggers of women and children! Day of glorious recollection! It was a sight never before witnessed—a whole nation rising in arms simultaneously, as if there was but one heart which felt, and one mind that deliberated. Every arm was raised against the common foe. The people of Spain were utterly unprepared for the struggle; their veteran army was

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secured in French garrisons in a distant land. The world never before beheld such a scene of honourable and disinterested devotion in a national cause. The Peninsula was the theatre for six eventful years of a struggle and of heroic actions, to which history can offer no parallel. Europe was saved, but Spain was ruined. The bones of 600,000 French soldiers blanching on the plains and mountains of Spain, remain as a warning to deter ambitious men from invading the territories of a brave, a loyal, and a united people. Upwards of half a million of the hardy peasantry were sacrificed on the altar of national honour and liberty. Spain suffered most severely by the contest; her finances were completely exhausted, her industry ruined, and her commerce annihilated. When peace was concluded, every other power in Europe reaped some advantage, or received some indemnity for its losses; commerce and industry once more began to flow in their usual channels through every other part of Europe, but they did not return to the ill-fated soil of Spain. The laurels of victory encircled the brows of her warriors, but the reward of their victories was carried off in triumph by other nations. She had, too, to behold her rich manufactories razed, her towns burned by friend and foe, her arsenals plundered, and the flower of her agricultural population, her brave and hardy peasantry, slaughtered in the field; widows and orphans, mutilated men, smoking ruins, and uncultivated fields, presented themselves to the view of the traveller in every angle of the kingdom. This was the reward of all her services and sacrifices in the cause of European liberty!

The natural fertility of the Peninsula, and the great resources which it possesses within itself, would, in a few years, have repaired these misfortunes; but Spain had still to endure another and more terrible ordeal. Hitherto she had waged open war against a declared enemy in a national cause; she had now to experience the selfish ingratitude of that Europe which her efforts had so greatly contributed to save, and the still worse ingratitude of those colonies she had nurtured and protected for three centuries. Her calamities were consummated by the insubordination of an army, in the honour and loyalty of which she confided for peace and security at home and for the submission and tranquillity of her revolted colonies. This was a momentous crisis in the history of Spain. The revolt of her

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colonies was produced by the example and principles of the French revolution; it was matured by the agency of rival nations, but it was consummated by military insubordination. Had the people of Spanish America arrived at that state of knowledge and population which in the natural course of things would have warranted their emancipation, in the same manner as the child grown to manhood is emancipated from parental care, then but one opinion of its justice and expediency could have existed; but when we recollect that the standard of revolt was raised, and their independence proclaimed, at a moment when the mother country was engaged in a struggle of life and death for the liberties of mankind, no generous mind can approve of that step at such a moment and under such circumstances. The South American provinces were neither by any means prepared for such a change, nor did they allege any grievances to warrant such a step; nor was it preceded by any act of oppression on the part of the mother country, or of remonstrance on theirs. All the waters of the Oronoco would not suffice to wash away the stain of ingratitude from the archives of their independence.

I shall make no personal comment on the individuals who placed themselves at the head of the revolution of Spanish America: they were men of various characters, and influenced, doubtless, by motives as various. But how can I find any excuse or palliation for the cold, unfeeling, griping avarice which induced foreign merchants to furnish the discontented population of South America with money and arms, and all the materials of war? Good faith and the feelings of humanity were sacrificed at the sordid shrine of mammon. The rich productions, the gold and silver of the new world, were expected to freight back the ships that carried out to the theatre of revolution, powder and bullets, cannon and swords; and even human beings were sent across the Atlantic to be slaughtered, as a mercantile speculation, or to prop up the broken fortunes of needy adventurers. The profligate and wicked of all nations flocked around the standard of rebellion; the governments of Europe, too, looked on with secret pleasure or with callous indifference at the misfortunes of Spain.

The Spanish armies, and the loyal part of the American people, which was considerable, supported the royal cause with that characteristic gallantry which has always distinguished them. Never did soldiers undergo with such extraordinary

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fortitude and perseverance such unexampled hardships and privations. Nature and man opposed their progress; they had to make long and dreary marches, day after day, and month after month, over a country of which, in Europe, no idea can possibly be formed. There were no military roads on which to march, no bridges over the rivers, no waggons to convey provisions or ammunition, no barracks or lodgings of any description, —none of those comforts or necessaries to which soldiers in every part of Europe are more or less accustomed. The march of the Spanish troops was over swamps and immense uninhabited plains, which form an horizon like the ocean, or along the sandy beach of desert coasts, often without being able to find for days together water with which to slake their thirst, while over their heads the burning rays of a tropical sun exerted their powerful influence. Sometimes the marching columns were ordered to clamber in search of the enemy over stupendous mountains, towering above the clouds, covered with woods as old as the deluge, and never before trod by the foot of civilized man, or through tracts intersected by deep and unfordable rivers, rapid torrents, and dangerous morasses. Month after month did they support themselves without any other rations or food than the wild animals they happened to kill on their march, and the wild fruits of the woods. They had no shoes or covering for their feet but the skins of the deer or the buffalo, rudely cut and tied on by thongs; their lodging was the damp ground,—their covering the canopy of heaven. These were only a few of the obstacles they had to encounter for a series of years, and at every step in the interior of that country in which every object is gigantic, and in the same state in which it was moulded by the Creator of the universe. The mountains, the plains, the rivers, and forests of Europe are on a dwarfish scale in comparison with those of the new world. The obstacles which they presented, however, might have been overcome by perseverance and fortitude, but they had to encounter others still greater, because they could not have been prognosticated by human foresight, or vanquished by human valour. Not a river, or a lake, or a marsh, wood, plain, or mountain, of that vast country, but harbours myriads of animals and reptiles noxious to man. The American tiger and alligator, enormous snakes, numerous beasts of prey, and fishes and venomous reptiles, preyed upon and

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destroyed this gallant band. The tiger would spring from a brake on the straggling or wounded soldier, exhausted by loss of blood, or fatigue; the alligator would rush from the bottom of a river or lake and seize him when he ventured to slake his thirst after a long and dreary march; and the insidious snake, coiled in every tree, would sting to death its victim. Even the vegetable kingdom conspired to destroy them, for there are trees and shrubs on the coasts and in the woods of America, dressed in the most beautiful and luxuriant foliage, which produce fruits inviting to the eye, fragrant to the smell, but imparting most deadly poison when eaten. The soldiers, worn-out with hunger and thirst, would swallow these fruits with avidity, unacquainted with their deleterious qualities, and in a few moments afterwards would be writhing in the agonies of death. Other trees are so essentially poisonous that those who took refuge under their shade from the noon-day sun, to repose their weary limbs or to seek shelter from the storm, would rise with faces and bodies swollen and their eyes starting out of their sockets, so disfigured as not to be recognized by their nearest friends. The rain, too, which at certain seasons of the year pours down in torrents from the heavens, inundates the plains, leaving the tops of the highest trees scarcely perceptible; so that the troops that had marched over them a few weeks before as dry and sultry deserts, would again have to traverse them in canoes made of the trunks of trees hollowed out,—thus navigating like the ocean these immense watery wastes. Then would the dry season come, the waters would gradually recede, or be absorbed by the heat, leaving here and there pools of stagnant water, with swarms of fishes and marine animals, and vegetable matter in a state of putrefaction and decomposition; the exhalations arising from them infecting the atmosphere, and producing fevers and dysenteries. There were no hospitals to receive the sick, nor medicines to arrest the progress of disease. After having to encounter all these obstacles by day, in themselves enough to strike terror and dismay into the bravest hearts, at night their repose would be continually interrupted by the Llañeros, or horsemen of the plains, who resembling the Arabs of the desert, would hang on their rear and flanks during the march, advancing and retiring with the rapidity of the eagle. The Spanish troops, bivouacked around the fires made to keep

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off the beasts of prey that howled in the wilderness that surrounded them, would be at every hour attacked by these predatory bands of naked horsemen, who would rush on them favoured by the darkness of the night, spreading dismay and destruction through their ranks; but no sooner would the Spaniards form to give them battle, than the enemy would disappear, thus harassing them by a continual succession of irregular attacks which would have worn out the frames of men even if formed of iron. Yet there was another enemy to encounter: the native Indians, the real proprietors of the soil, would assail them with showers of arrows, poisoned with the mortiferous *curare*, from their places of ambush, and carry death among their ranks whenever they had to traverse the woods or mountains. These were the hardships, and this the species of warfare, which the Spanish army had to encounter. Discipline, valour, and fortitude were met by ambush, fatigue, disease, and all the train of dangers which such a country, infested by such tribes of animals and reptiles, could oppose to man. I believe I do not risk contradiction when I say that of all the nations of Europe, Spaniards only could have supported such an accumulation of hardships, without succumbing under their pressure, and without a murmur. Never did the Spanish character appear so full of heroism as during these campaigns. Actions and feats of valour were performed, and military talent evinced both by generals and soldiers, which would have done honour to the heroes of ancient Greece and Rome. But of what avail are individual and national honour, or the zeal and experience of generals, and the valour of soldiers, if powerful rival nations are resolved to accomplish their ambitious purposes, regardless alike of national good faith or international law? The united efforts of talent, and patriotism, and valour, were sacrificed to that spirit of intriguing policy which would make force assume the appearance of justice, and give underhand hostility the plausible name of neutrality. But notwithstanding all the assistance which the South Americans received from foreign hands—notwithstanding the host of enemies which were raised against the dominion of Spain, in consequence of the cruel impolicy of the tribunals for the confiscation of property belonging to those who had taken up arms against the king, which were often made instruments to satisfy private vengeance and

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avarice,—yet the royal armies, commanded by brave and experienced generals, and assisted by the greater part of the population, were on the eve of triumph, when a new and unexpected turn was suddenly given to political affairs, of a nature which extinguished every hope, and severed America from the Spanish crown for ever.

The Spanish army concentrated in the vicinity of Cadiz, to form an expedition for the purpose of reducing the colonies to obedience, by a strange infatuation mutinied, threw off their allegiance to their sovereign, and by a most dangerous precedent, erected itself into a legislative body; and from it emanated a constitution for the government of the Spanish monarchy. Every nation in Europe should have taken the alarm, and discountenanced this proceeding, as dangerous to their own interests, and subversive of those principles of loyalty and subordination without which an army is more to be dreaded at home than it would be formidable to a foreign foe. But the nations of Europe remained passive spectators of the anarchy which this event produced in the Peninsula, or fomented and encouraged the political schism which they conceived would divide and weaken the power of the Spanish monarchy. Nobody can doubt this fact who views with attention their conduct during that event, and the advantages they took of it. The day that presented in Europe this terrible example of military insubordination was also the signal for the final independence of Spanish America. The army of operations in that country refused to obey orders; the officers were divided in political opinions; the people refused to give supplies. It was a complete scene of demoralization and universal anarchy. The republican party gained a triumph over the folly and insubordination of the Spanish armies, which they could not obtain over their discipline and valour in the field. That deplorable event inflicted a greater, a more irreparable injury on Spain than the sanguinary war of Napoleon; for it was not only the means of separating America from her dominion, but it sowed the bitter seeds of discord and party spirit among the people of the same land, and opened wounds the most difficult to be healed.

Thus did Spain lose her empire over the western continent, which she had governed for three centuries by laws full of wisdom and humanity. South America is now independent of

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Spain, and surely every man of reflective mind must feel sorry at the separation. Had the inhabitants of that continent been tyrannically oppressed by the mother country; had they arrived at that period of strength and knowledge which would have rendered their emancipation a matter of course, from the nature of man and of things; and had they asserted their rights and proclaimed their independence in an open, manly, and generous manner, every liberal mind must have applauded their motives and rejoiced in their success; but the manner and time of shaking off their allegiance to the crown of Castile, casts an indelible stain on the act. But although they have for ever broken the link of political connexion with the mother country, I hope the chain of good-will and the ties of blood, which rivet the affections of kindred people, are not yet entirely broken. That their emancipation was prematurely effected nobody who has a complete knowledge of Spanish America can possibly doubt. They have entailed on themselves anarchy and civil war; and many generations must probably pass away before they are restored to that state of order and prosperity which they enjoyed under the crown of Spain. Whoever takes the trouble to examine with attention the official statements which I have inserted, as No. II. of this Appendix, exhibiting the immense decay of agriculture and commerce in the Spanish colonies on the American continent since the declaration of their independence, must agree with me, that that event was premature at least by half a century. How dissimilar were the colonial establishments of Spain and Great Britain on the continent of America. Those of the former power were founded and established at the expense and under the authority of the government of the mother country; those of the latter were formed by private individuals at their own expense,—by individuals who fled to the wilds of the new world, to seek a refuge from religious and political persecution, and who only acknowledged and recognized the supremacy of the mother country in order to enjoy the protection afforded by her power, and the advantages of her commerce. How different, also, the motives, the means, and the time of their separation. The British colonies conceived that they were unlawfully taxed by a legislative power, whose supremacy they did not recognize to that extent. They calmly remonstrated,—they appealed to the justice of the

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king of Great Britain, whom they revered, and to the wisdom of the parliament of that country, which they loved ;—but appeals and remonstrances the most submissively respectful, were answered by the stern command of absolute, unconditional submission; and coercion was employed when concession would have been more politic. The struggle was short, and British America became the republic of the United States. But the Spanish colonies, on the other hand, without making a complaint, without petition or remonstrance, and at a moment when the mother country was fighting the battles of the free of every part of the world, endeavoured to ruin her for ever by an act of the darkest ingratitude. But however deeply we may lament the terrible scenes of slaughter and devastation which that unfortunate country has presented to our view during a series of years—although we know that the wayward, uneducated child has too soon abandoned the protecting care of an indulgent parent, yet we must confess that every province which belonged to Spain on the American continent has been for many years emancipated, and *de facto* independent. Not a single foot of land on that continent is this day in possession of Spain; not a single soldier supports her rights, nor is there a port blockaded by her ships of war; and I believe that the Spanish government can never seriously meditate an attempt at conquest by again sending an army across the Atlantic. The question is not at the present moment, therefore, whether South America is or is not independent; nor should it be whether that country can or can not be reconquered by the armies of Spain—for the idea of reconquering that country at the present day would be absurd and preposterous. I am willing to believe that there are few men so ignorant, or so mad, as to imagine that an immense continent, of which the Peninsula would scarcely make a province, its nearest coast separated from the mother country by upwards of 3000 miles of ocean, containing, besides, seventeen millions of inhabitants, with all the elements of defence within themselves, with the example of the United States before them, proud of their liberty, could be reduced to submission by the small proportion of warriors which twelve millions of Spaniards could send thither in ships, even were they supported by a powerful navy, and backed by the good feelings, nay, by the co-operation of all Europe. The day of conquest is passed; let us not lead ourselves astray by the illusions of fancy, or by the

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dreams of imagination. Nature has distinctly marked the line which divides Europe from America; and a wise Providence, by a chain of events which could not have been foreseen or counteracted by the wisdom or power of man, has brought about a separation which has wrought a wonderful change in the political and commercial relations of the world. The conquest of the whole or of any part of America, by Spain, is in my opinion absolutely impossible; and were it practicable I believe it would be highly impolitic, and ruinous to both countries. Even admitting the supposition of the possibility of conquest, after a few years of forced submission the same exciting causes to revolt would exist—a similar bloody struggle would take place—the same scenes would again be repeated—and precisely the same results would be the consequence. Spain would be more and more impoverished, depopulated, and ruined by the attempt. Therefore, the question should not be now about conquest, but conciliation. This is the great object to which the energies of every mind, and the feelings of every heart, should be turned. CONCILIATION is the paramount interest of Spain; and it is also the paramount interest of her colonies that they be quickly restored to a friendly intercourse with the mother country. Such is, I am persuaded, the wish of every Spaniard who understands and consults the true interests of his native land; and few are the hearts on the vast continent of America that do not beat responsive to that feeling.

Let us proceed, then, to examine the means by which this great and most desirable object of conciliation can be best effected between Spain and her colonies. On what terms and conditions is the mother country to be reconciled to children who disobeyed her mandates, and separated themselves from her authority? Is this work of conciliation, I would ask, to be accomplished by the agency or interference of those powers whose most strenuous efforts were directed to produce this separation, or is it to be brought about by the natural feelings which simultaneously impel the people of Spanish America and of the Peninsula to stretch their arms across the ocean, and to embrace each other with the warm affection of parent and child who have been long separated by misrepresentation and intrigue? In my opinion, neither Spain nor her colonies should recur to the intervention, to the dubious friendship, of those governments who caused or promoted this unnatural understanding, and the fatal consequences which it

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has produced to both countries. At the present crisis, Spain, perhaps, would consult her own best interests by acting the magnanimous part of a great and generous nation, for which she has been always distinguished. Were she like a wise parent to forget and forgive past injuries,—and I am convinced that she would be met half-way by the whole population of her emancipated colonies, with one general acclamation of joy,—Spain would, I am convinced, obtain from the good will of the people of America, terms and advantages which they would never concede to foreign mediation, and which could not be wrung from them by force of arms. By the recognition of South American independence by the Spanish government, on the broad base of reciprocal utility, a great object would be accomplished. I believe this is the line of policy which the friends of Spain are desirous to see adopted; and I am certain that the governments of all the American republics would grant terms to Spain the most liberal and advantageous. I have no doubt that they would cheerfully pay a large sum of money in return for the tranquillity which they would enjoy, the advantages which would arise to their commerce, and the solidity which the recognition of their independence by the mother country would give to their governments. They would be willing, perhaps, to cede to Spain certain depôts for the merchandize and produce of the Peninsula, as ports for the repair of her ships, and for all the various objects of commercial factories. They would also grant to Spanish ships, produce, and manufactures a reduction in charges and duties; and no other nation could take offence at the preference. Although the South Americans would spurn the idea of being subdued or coerced, they have still a strong feeling of affection and attachment to the mother country; for they speak the same language, they profess the same religion, their habits and customs are similar, and the ties of blood by which the Spaniards of both hemispheres are united are strong and indissoluble. Therefore, if the government of Spain wishes to take advantage of this favourable moment, while the hearts of the people of America are yet warm towards them, they should not delay or temporize; procrastination is dangerous. Let it be borne in mind, that it is now twenty-three years since the Spanish colonies first raised the standard of independence. The greater part of those who figured at the commencement of that epoch have either fallen in the

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field, or have sunk into their graves in the course of nature. The rising generation has been born under the republican standard; they have imbibed new habits and customs from their free intercourse with other nations, while they only hear of Spain by the traditions of their elders, and only know her from the impressions left on their minds by the effects of that terrible civil war which are visible in every part of their country. If year after year is still allowed to pass away, without some decisive measure being adopted with respect to the colonies, the consequences may be easily imagined. Half measures and palliatives serve only to irritate the feelings, and to estrange the affections. In a short time, the people of Spanish America will be reconciled to foreign manners, they will become accustomed to foreign produce and manufactures, and by imbibing prejudices they will be at last taught to hate and despise the mother country, and the next generation will most probably look on Spaniards as foreigners, if not as their greatest enemies. But Spain, by entering into commercial treaties, solemnly guaranteed by the republican governments, founded on principles of reciprocal utility and expediency, would gain more solid advantages by recognizing the independence of America, in ten years of good understanding and intelligence, than she derived from that country during the three hundred years when she held it as a dependency with the exclusive monopoly of the commerce. Formerly Spain was only an agent through which other manufacturing countries received the gold and silver which Spaniards dug from the mines of Mexico and Peru. She was besides depopulated by a continental drain on her industrious population, while the sterling, the only real, wealth and strength of a nation—agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, were neglected, abandoned, and despised. By the absolute independence of South America, by government promoting and encouraging the industry and commerce of the Peninsula, Spain would soon be able to attain to that height of riches and power, and to assume that exalted station, to which she is called by nature. The naturally rich and fertile Spain will send her wines and oils, her cloth and silk, her lead and copper and quicksilver, and all the rich and various productions of her climate, to the new world, while, on the other hand, the new republics will find it to be their interest to renew their commercial relations and their friendly intercourse with the

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mother country. The inhabitants of Spain and her colonies may be considered as being one and the same family. For God's sake let them be reconciled! let them be once more united in the bonds of friendship! It is the decree of heaven stamped on the face of nature, that has ordained this double alliance of blood and interest. It can only be the enemies of Spain, the foes of her prosperity, the rivals of her commerce, that would wish to perpetuate the disunion, or to throw obstacles and difficulties in the way of reconciliation. It is the enemies of Spain that wish to perpetuate hostile feelings; they feed and nourish mutual antipathies by recalling to the one the recollection of real or imaginary wrongs, telling them that they were conquered, oppressed, insulted; to the other they paint in glowing colours, the humiliation they have suffered from defeat and expulsion, and the right which they have to exercise dominion over America: but they deceive and cajole both. I know, and I speak from experience, that the general feelings of the inhabitants of America are still favourable to Spain. No other nation could this day obtain, either by treaty or by force, the advantages which to her they would cheerfully grant. By such an alliance, which is natural, Spanish commerce would again flow into its usual channels; the navy would gradually increase; capitals which are now hoarded up, or which are accumulating in the funds of foreign countries, would be brought into circulation; the blood now stagnant would again circulate through all the veins and arteries of an expiring commerce, and restore to vigorous health a declining country.

The United States of America may be adduced as a living example to prove the great and extraordinary advantages, which, under circumstances very similar to those under which Spain labours, arise to parent states from the emancipation of their colonies. At the period of their emancipation, the United States only imported about three millions of dollars in British manufactures, and their population did not exceed three millions of souls. This day they import upwards of the value of sixty millions of dollars in British manufactures, and their population exceeds twelve millions. If these happy consequences have been observed to arise from the separation of North America from Great Britain, the soil of which is comparatively barren, and its climate ungenial, surely a greater increase of population, of pro-

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duce, and consumption, may be anticipated, when Spanish America becomes tranquil and industrious.

But never can tranquillity be restored to that unfortunate country until its independence is recognized by Spain; for there are thousands of persons in South America so totally ignorant of the true position of Spain and the state of Europe, that, still relying implicitly on succour from the Peninsula, and keeping up a correspondence with the emigrants disseminated over the West India islands, who always feed them with hopes of an expedition coming to their relief, they are continually forming factions, and exciting to insurrections against the existing governments. Others more wicked and depraved, take advantage of the name of the king, whenever discontent, or revenge, or poverty, impels them to take up arms to oppose the constituted authorities. Thus we find the whole continent of America presenting one great panorama of anarchy and bloodshed. Were their independence recognized by the mother country, then no pretence for revolt could exist; peace and tranquillity would reign through the whole extent of the republics; security of life and property would be recognized even by the turbulent, and commerce and industry would again return to that unhappy land.

Many are the facts and circumstances which I could bring forward to prove the utility which Spain would reap from the recognition of her revolted colonies, and the advantages which the colonies would derive by making liberal concessions on the other hand to the mother country. But it would be almost an insult to common sense to urge any further arguments on a subject which is so plainly demonstrated by the relative position of Spain and America. Neither would I presume to point out the line of policy which any government should pursue; but the observations which I take the liberty to make are suggested by a long and dearly bought experience on this important question, and a sincere wish that the government of Spain may not be blinded to their real interests, from a false feeling of national pride, or a false sense of national honour. I know it from personal observation (I cannot repeat it too often), that the people of South America look towards the mother country with sentiments of the greatest affection and veneration. The inhabitants of the republic of the United States of America still sympathize with

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their ancestors the English, notwithstanding their political separation. They feel, think, and act like Englishmen: like them they are addicted to commerce and navigation; they are daring and adventurous; they look to England as their model for imitation, and they speak of her institutions with respect and reverence. The inhabitants of Spanish America, on the other hand, feel and think like Spaniards, and they will ever look up to their mother country with respect and veneration, unless a system of cold and unnatural repulsion, at once useless and impolitic, drives them into foreign alliances, which, if once established (and Spain may still prevent them taking place), will for ever destroy those feelings of affection which are not yet extinguished. Family quarrels, however inveterate, may be appeased by kindness; a permanent reconciliation may be effected by mutual concession; but severity, neglect, recrimination, and persecution, engender hatred, deadly, irreconcilable hatred, which may be easily transmitted to succeeding generations. Spain, without the necessity of foreign mediation, may be reconciled to her colonies; but a reconciliation can never be effected, if rival nations, with sinister views, interpose the wiles of intrigue to promote misunderstanding, and to widen more and more the breach by which they are so unhappily and unnecessarily divided.

Many persons, with the best possible intentions, and no doubt meaning well to their country, perhaps otherwise profoundly learned, but who unfortunately do not understand the real sources of national wealth and power, oppose the recognition of the independence of the South American republics, on the false and erroneous principle that the commerce and grandeur of Spain would be irretrievably ruined by such a measure. They still support the old and absurd doctrines of coercion, re-conquest, and of exclusive commerce, without which they imagine that the industry of the Peninsula cannot be regenerated. They maintain, that even were the governments of South America to grant to the ships and produce of the mother country, a reduction in duties greater than to any other power, neither the one nor the other could compete with those of England, France, and the United States of America. They say that the wines, brandies, oil, and fruits of France, the manufactured goods of Great Britain, and the flour and provisions of America, would undersell the same description of articles exported from Spain in the

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market of South America. Surely those who argue thus (and unfortunately it is the common opinion in Spain), have not examined the nature and capabilities of the soil of Spain, and the extent of her great natural resources; they cannot certainly have compared them with the climate, soil, and natural resources of those nations whose competition they so much dread, even with advantages in point of duties; for had they attentively examined the real state of the case, they would have found that their fears and apprehensions are totally unfounded. The wines, the brandies, the oil and fruits of Spain, are not only essentially better than those of France, but they are preferred by the people of South America because they have been accustomed to consume them. It is very true that Spain cannot, at the present day, compete with England or France in manufacturing certain articles for exportation, nor would it be her interest to attempt it; but there are certain articles in which Spain not only rivals but is superior to England and France, and she will always be able to maintain the superiority if her energies and resources are properly directed. It is unnecessary for me to repeat that which is so generally known and acknowledged, that the wool, the silk, the hemp, wines, and oils of Spain, are superior to those produced in any other country in Europe. All the first and principal materials which are the sources of national wealth, are concentrated within herself; it only requires a fostering and protecting hand for their complete developement. Great quantities of flour are shipped every year from the United States of America to the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and it is sold cheaper than the flour imported from Spain, which only pays half the duty levied on American flour, and notwithstanding that the agricultural labourers in the United States earn on an average each a dollar per day, while the general average wages of a labourer in Spain is only two reals a day, or one-tenth of a dollar. Moreover, an acre of land under wheat in Spain, will produce nearly double the quantity of an acre in the United States, with equal cultivation and care. Therefore, it must appear very strange, that under such disadvantages, the flour of the United States can be sold cheaper in the markets of Cuba and Puerto Rico than the flour of Spain; but the reason is obvious. In North America, from the interior to the sea coasts, there is a great facility of conveying produce by water; and although the rivers are generally navi-

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gable to a great extent, yet whenever any obstacles have been found to prevent their navigation, they have been surmounted by canals and roads being made. The flour and provisions are thus transported from the fields in which they grow in the very heart of the country, to the seaports at a very trifling expense; while, on the other hand, to transport the productions of the fertile plains of Castile and La Mancha to the coast, would cost considerably more than their value, in consequence of the difficulty of communication. This, therefore, is the real obvious reason why Spain is not able to compete with foreign trade, either in South America or her own colonies, and can form no ground of argument to support the doctrine of non-recognition of South American independence. The only solid objections which can be offered by those who would oppose a recognition, are, as far as I can judge, that there are no established governments in any part of that country with which to form treaties, or to guarantee treaties if made; that revolutions and changes take place almost every day; that though those who hold the reins of government this year may be disposed to grant favourable terms to the mother country, those who replace them the next season may think proper to annul every thing stipulated, and solemnly guaranteed by their predecessors. These are, in my opinion, the difficulties which militate against reconciliation between Spain and her colonies. All other objections are so puerile and unsubstantial, that they would not stand one moment the test of solid investigation, on the principles of sound policy or reason. The best and most efficacious balsam that could be applied to heal the wounds inflicted on the agriculture, industry, and commerce of Spain, would be to effect a reconciliation with her colonies; then she would be able to meet the concourse of all the nations of the earth in a fair field of commercial competition in the markets of South America. But in order to be able to stand this competition, the agriculture of the Peninsula must be encouraged and protected; canals must be cut and roads formed; and her industry and exertions must be principally directed to the raising of those choice productions of her soil, in which she cannot be surpassed or rivalled by Great Britain, France, or the United States of America. It is obvious, even to the ignorant, that Spain enjoys many advantages which the industry of other countries cannot supply. For example, it

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is observed in her commerce with England, which of all other countries is undoubtedly the most advanced in the application of steam and machinery to manufactures, and the most industrious on the face of the globe, that the balance of trade is decidedly in favour of Spain. What then may not be her preponderance when her hardy and sober peasantry have stronger inducements to industry than they have at present, by canals being cut, rail-roads made, steam carriages established; and by throwing open the vast continent of America to her commercial enterprise, which is the natural channel into which that commerce, now entirely paralyzed, should flow? A great deal more might be said on this subject, but I am aware that to men of knowledge and experience it is unnecessary to urge it further; and in vain would arguments, and examples, and facts, be brought forward in order to produce conviction on the minds of men inaccessible to reason, or to remove the erroneous preestablished opinions and prejudices of the ignorant.

I have only enumerated a part of the advantages which the commerce, population, and consequently the general prosperity of the Peninsula, would ultimately derive from the recognition of South American independence, by opening those channels of communication and mutual intercourse which have been so long obstructed by war. There is another point of view, equally interesting, in which this subject should be considered. The safety of the opulent and flourishing islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, in themselves worth an empire, may, in a great measure, depend upon a conciliatory policy being adopted towards the revolted colonies. By such measures they would be effectually secured from any attempts, on the part of the Mexicans or Colombians, to effect their independence or their destruction, either by intrigue or by force. The peculiar nature of the population of Cuba has hitherto deterred the white inhabitants from following the example of separation from the mother country set by the inhabitants of the neighbouring continent. However strong the feeling may be in the breasts of some of the natives in favour of a system of independence, yet the fatal consequences which most infallibly would attend such a step, stare them continually in the face. The sun that should rise on Cuba as an independent state, would not set without beholding the white population overwhelmed by the blacks. Therefore,

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leaving affection out of the question, self-interest, self-preservation, should perpetuate the alliance between Spain and her colonies, and form an indissoluble connexion. As long as Cuba continues to be an integral part of the Spanish monarchy, the free people of colour and slaves may be kept in subordination; but, twenty-four hours after a separation takes place, (mark my words! for they are pronounced after many years of experience and of attentive observation of the colonies,) the dwellings, the rich plantations, the store-houses, and merchandize of the white inhabitants will be a prey to the flames, and the whites themselves will be immolated amidst the glare of one general conflagration and the cries of vengeance. It only requires a moment's reflection on the numbers, the peculiarities, and condition of the population of Cuba, the extent of its territory, and the nature of its climate, in order to carry conviction to the mind of the wildest enthusiast in favour of the emancipation of that island, of the inevitable destruction by which such an event must be attended. The fate of St. Domingo, once the richest colony perhaps in the world, stands before them, almost touching their shores, a warning and a commentary. These are the consequences, the certain consequences, which the inhabitants of Cuba would bring down on themselves by following the example of Mexico and Colombia.

I shall now proceed to examine how far the interests of other powers, besides those of Spain, are connected with the preservation of the remaining Spanish colonies in the hands of the mother country. Of all the maritime and commercial nations, the United States has the greatest interest at stake, and I believe a sincere desire that Cuba should remain under the dominion of Spain.* The commercial and political interests of the

* The following was the state of the commerce of the island of Cuba in 1830: —The value of imports amounted to 16,171,563 dollars; of exports, to 15,870,968 dollars. The whole amount of tonnage of shipping that entered the different ports of the island, for the same period, was 247,058 tons; of which 215,479 tons were of foreign shipping, and the remaining 48,918 tons Spanish. Spain only imported to Cuba the value of 1,422,811 dollars, and exported the value of 2,545,370 dollars.

The agricultural wealth of Cuba, including lands, trees, houses, machinery, slaves, and animals, was estimated to amount to 508,189,332 dollars; the value of vegetable produce, to 40,639,871 dollars; and the value of animal produce, to 9,023,116.—Total value of produce, 49,662,987 dollars.

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United States, and the remaining Spanish colonies, are closely interwoven and identified. The American commerce constitutes three-fourths of the whole of the imports and exports of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Besides this powerful motive of commercial interests, there are others of policy, which must always make the government of Washington view with an eye of jealousy, and (if the interests of their country were consulted,) would make them oppose the independence or destruction of Cuba, or its conquest by any foreign power. Should the numerical superiority of the blacks be forcibly established over the whites in that island, what vigilance, what policy, or what power could prevent the contagion reaching, throwing into confusion, and, perhaps, endangering the safety of the slave-holding states of the Anglo-American Union, in which there are at this moment upwards of two millions of slaves, with a very small proportion of whites. Again, if the people of Cuba should be so mad, at any future period, as to throw off their allegiance to the mother country, and consequently become a commonwealth of blacks (for between independence and such a fate there is no alternative), would not England and France, I ask, by their power and influence, easily obtain possession of those commanding points on the coasts of Cuba and her dependencies, which would constitute them masters of the Florida stream and windward passage, the key to the navigation of those seas? If war should break out between the United States and these powers, the ships of the former would be entirely excluded from the advantages of an immense trade; and the coasts of Louisiana, and of East and West Florida, would be continually menaced, and at the mercy of a powerful enemy, who, once established in their neighbourhood, might ravage them with impunity. On the other hand, no European power could consent to Cuba becoming a prize to the United States, on the same principle of the exclusion of their commerce from those seas in time of war. Whoever views with an impartial eye the local situation of the disorganized republics that have been formed in Spanish America, must be convinced that the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico are in imminent danger of suffering the same cruel fate: therefore we come to this conclusion, that the United States can never, consistently with their own dearest interests of commerce and national security, allow the island of Cuba, or any part of it, to be possessed

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by Great Britain or France, or to become a part of the Mexican or Colombian republics. England and France, as far as I can see, have no interest whatever but in the preservation to Spain of her remaining colonies. They would prefer beholding them in the possession of the Mexicans or Colombians, or in the hands of the negroes, rather than have them governed by the United States of America. It is only necessary to calculate the nature and extent of the commerce carried on between the United States and these islands, to be convinced that it is the interest of both to cultivate a close and a cordial understanding. It is the United States that supplies the planters of Cuba and Puerto Rico with staves for their rum puncheons and sugar hogsheads, with provisions and necessaries; and it is in the markets of that country where they chiefly find a sale for their sugar, molasses, and coffee; and from the proximity of America to them, and her naval power, and great resources, she will be able to lend them effectual assistance should any insurrection break out, or should the Mexican or Colombian governments dare attempt to invade them. Self-interest is the great and leading motive which stimulates nations as well as individuals to exertion. It is the interest of the United States to prevent with all her power, her energy, and resources, any other nation from taking possession of or revolutionizing Cuba and Puerto Rico.

I have thus briefly detailed the state of the Spanish colonies, with respect to foreign powers, as they have presented themselves to my mind. I shall now conclude by observing, that the recognition of the independence of the South American republics, besides effectually warding off any hostile attempt which might be made by them, would also, by lessening the necessity of keeping up an immense military and naval establishment, relieve the colonies from the heavy burdens which now press upon them, in order to raise a revenue for its support. One-fourth of the military and naval force now employed, and consequently one-fourth of the present expenditure, would be sufficient, with the assistance of good police regulations, to preserve order and tranquillity within the islands: this would be an easy matter, for the inhabitants of these colonies generally are naturally inclined to be obedient to the laws. Under an upright administration of the finances they would yield a considerable revenue; the duties on imports and exports, which are now oppressively heavy,

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might be greatly reduced; agriculture and commerce would thereby flourish to their full extent, and both the mother country and the colonies would feel the most signal advantages therefrom. Every thing in the colonies is at the present moment out of its natural course; it is a forced state of affairs, which cannot long exist; nature, like water, will find its level. I pronounce that the safety, the salvation of the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, depends on the recognition of the independence of the South American republics by Spain—on the entire cessation of the slave trade—the impartial administration of justice by the constituted authorities, and the cultivation of a good understanding with the United States of America.

Although we may lament the premature revolution of Spanish America, yet when we view that event with a philosophical eye, and examine it on principles of sound policy, we shall perceive that it must prove eventually a fortunate occurrence for Spain. The Peninsula is as I have already said, naturally the richest country in Europe; and consequently it possesses within itself all the essential elements for the most powerful political organization. The resources of Spain are still immensely great for all the purposes of commerce, and for the formation of an opulent and powerful empire. Her geographical position clearly shews the high destiny which nature intended she should occupy among the nations of the world. It would be most erroneous to infer from the rise, decline, and fall of the Roman empire, that Spain, in consequence of the loss of her colonies, of her gold and silver mines, of the separation of seventeen millions of people from her sway, and the misfortunes produced by that succession of wars which ruined her navy and her commerce,—is destined to share the same fate of annihilation. It would be equally absurd to draw a parallel between her and the ancient states of Tyre and Carthage, or between the modern states of Genoa, Venice, and Holland. These states were purely maritime, fed and maintained by commerce, without possessing any considerable territories beyond their walls; they entirely depended on foreign countries for subsistence: when their cities had surrendered to an enemy, their empire was at an end; for although they might sweep the ocean with their fleets, they had no har-

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bours to repair their ships, no agricultural population to recruit their crews, or to furnish them with provisions. Even the opulent and enterprising nation of Holland, surrounded by water, intersected by canals and sand-banks, having no agricultural population, must be always the prey, (as we have seen it happen in our own days,) to a continental invader. They may embark on board their ships, as they threatened to do on a former occasion, and emigrate with their families and riches to a foreign land, opening their sluices, and leaving their towns and gardens a watery waste: thus only could they preserve their independence and their liberty. The Roman empire, too, formed of a multiplicity of conquered nations and tribes, speaking different languages—a heterogeneous mixture of people, governed by the arbitrary will of the Roman generals, and kept in subordination only by the presence of the Roman legions, could not be lasting; for it was not built on the affections of the people, but arose out of the casualties of war, and, once dissolved, it would have been impossible again to have united it under one head. Therefore no criterion can be formed of the destiny of Spain from the fate of these empires, and kingdoms, and states, which had within themselves, from their first establishment, the elements of disunion and disorganization. The loss of America will I hope serve to concentrate the energy and strength of Spain within a smaller circle, but still amply sufficient for the exercise of great power, and for wielding it to advantage; for never has she, even in the meridian of her prosperity, during the reign of Charles the Fifth, when her armies and fleets made Europe tremble, arrived at that height of power of which she is susceptible. Her European territories enjoy advantages of soil, and climate, and of situation, which no other nation of that continent can boast of in an equal degree. On the side of France she is protected from continental invasion by the formidable natural barrier of the Pyrenees, which extends from sea to sea. Her line of coasts stretches upwards of 400 leagues, and those coasts are more extensive, and better calculated for commerce, than those of any other European power; they at once embrace the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean sea. Her ports and harbours are good and numerous, and she is mistress of the finest and most commodious naval arsenals in the world. Her woods produce excellent materials for the construction of ships; her

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mines yield gold and silver; and they also yield what is better still, iron and lead, coal and copper, and a variety of valuable minerals. Her land is fertile, in an extraordinary degree, in the productions peculiar to Europe; but it also produces the sugar cane, the coffee and the plantain trees, the natives of tropical climates. The vine and the silk-worm add to her riches their choicest productions, and almost every fruit, or grain, or plant of northern or southern climes, vegetates in perfection beneath her sky. The population of the Peninsula, although at present it does not exceed thirteen millions, may be augmented, without endangering their subsistence, to thirty millions; for there are large tracts of virgin land, teeming with fertility, yet uncultivated. She has all the elements of prosperity within herself, and the means of bringing them into existence and putting them into action: she can be, at the same time, an agricultural, a manufacturing, and a commercial nation, which, when combined with wisdom, constitute the great sources of individual and national wealth and prosperity. Another circumstance which most materially contributes to the union and strength of Spain and national feeling, is that the inhabitants speak the same language, and they have only one religion. With all these advantages of soil, climate, situation, language, and religion, Spain is totally dissimilar to Rome, to Carthage, and Tyre. She stands on a basis that may be deemed indestructible, if any thing on earth can be so called. It would require more than human power to destroy such a country; it would require the combined wickedness of man, the convulsions of nature, and the wrath of heaven.

England, with the idea of promoting and enlarging the sphere of her commercial relations, struck a terrible blow at the colonial power of Spain; but however erroneous may have been this policy of the cabinet of St. James's, I believe England to be the natural and best ally of the Spanish nation, for she is not her rival in any of the productions of her soil: far from it, she takes her wines, her wool, and fruits, in return for her manufactured goods, and money; therefore it is the interest of England that Spain should be prosperous and tranquil. How different is the case with her neighbour France, the natural rival of Spain! for she grows wine, and oil, and silk, all of them inferior in quality to those of the latter country; therefore, whatever may be the

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flattering professions of Frenchmen, they can never view with feelings of pleasure the prosperity of Spain. Let us look to history, and in its pages we may trace the disasters which French alliances have invariably brought down upon her; we shall find that the decline of industry and national prosperity in the Peninsula, may be dated from the day on which the Family Compact was ratified. Let us examine the course of events from that fatal period, and we shall perceive that French interest and intrigue have promoted wars, and revolutions, and invasions, and party spirit, in the Peninsula, for the purpose of impoverishing and dividing her, and to prevent her turning her attention to the arts and sciences, to manufactures and commerce, and thus from rising far above herself in the scale of nations. We have only to compare the soil of France and its productions with those of Spain—to compare the peasantry of one country with those of the other, and we shall find that the natural and physical advantages are decidedly in favour of the productions and inhabitants of the latter. How long, then, will Spaniards perpetuate discord and party spirit merely to suit the sinister views, the ambition, the intriguing rivalship, the suspicious friendship, of their Gallic neighbours! I hope that a dear-bought experience may have taught them to perceive their real interests; and I believe that there is still too much honour and too much patriotism in the bosom of the sons of Iberia, again to place themselves in such a position as to reduce them to the degrading alternative of submitting to the armed interference of other powers in their domestic concerns, or placing foreign garrisons in their cities and fortresses, which would be at once the scourge, the degradation, and the ruin of their country.

The Peninsula is fast rising above that state of political weakness to which by revolution and wars she was reduced, as well as by the unpardonable intrigues of foreign powers. Although the rivers of Spain, generally speaking, are not calculated for the navigation of steam boats, yet, from the dryness and compactness of the soil, rail roads might be made with great facility; and the government is actively promoting these useful labours, which will afford that rapidity of communication so essentially necessary to impart life and vigour to agricultural and commercial industry. Canals are fast making, the high roads are excellent, and no country in Europe has a better mail-coach

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establishment. The spirit of improvement and enterprise rapidly increase; and when rail roads are formed, and new canals opened by commercial companies, and by private contracts,—when the abundant harvests of the fertile provinces of Castile and La Mancha can be conducted cheaply and expeditiously to the sea-coast,—when the coal which abounds in some provinces can be expeditiously and cheaply transported to others where there is a scarcity of fuel for the manufacturing of cutlery, hardware, &c. —then will Spain be cultivated, improved, and become thickly inhabited. The comforts and superfluities of life, and the luxuries of the remotest climes, will be introduced among the inhabitants of the interior provinces of the kingdom, into whose valleys and mountains every thing is now carried at a vast expense of labour, and time, and money, on the backs of horses and mules; that ancient spirit of national pride and of patriotism which renders a people invincible, will again be revived, and Spain will become what she should be, one of the richest and most powerful nations on the face of the earth. The colonies and dependencies which the king of Spain actually possesses in the four quarters of the globe, are superior in situation and extent to those of any other European power, excepting those of England. The remaining colonies, insignificant as they may appear in comparison with the vast extent of her late possessions on the continent of America, if properly governed and honestly administered, will be, in my opinion, likely to be of more sterling value to the mother country than that immense depopulated country which was at once the grave of her population and the bane of her industry, and which completely repressed the energies of an active and naturally enterprising people.

Here we must take a review of the colonies and dependencies which Spain possesses in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. In the Mediterranean sea, she holds the islands of Majorca, Minorca, and Ivica, which are eminently fertile, and carefully cultivated by an industrious, brave, and loyal people. The harbour of Port Mahon is one of the finest in the world; in peace or war it is of importance, from its commanding situation for the commerce of the Levant and the Barbary states. On the African coast, at the embouchure of the Straits of Gibraltar, she is mistress of the almost impregnable fortress of Ceuta, which equally with Gibraltar commands the entrance of the Mediter-

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ranean from the Atlantic Ocean. This fortress, besides being one of the principal keys of that high road of all nations, may, at some future day, form a noble commercial depôt for traffic with the Barbary states, when they become more civilized, more industrious, and, consequently, more populous—events which may be anticipated. The first step towards the civilization of these barbarians has been already taken; the establishment of a French colony at Algiers should be hailed as an auspicious omen. The captivity of Christians by the infidel corsair is for ever abolished, and the religion of Christ, and the arts and sciences, may be diffused over a land where the most profound ignorance and the darkness of superstition have had their reign for ages; therefore Ceuta, which hitherto has only been a prison for criminals, and a heavy expense to government, may yet repay the millions it has cost since its first establishment up to this day, and be of great national utility. In the Atlantic Ocean, on the western coast of Africa, and about sixty miles distance from its shore, she possesses the Canary Islands, well known in Europe for their salubrious climate and valuable productions, and containing a hardy and industrious population. They are admirably calculated as a place of refreshment, and for affording supplies for ships sailing to the East and West Indies, and to America, and therefore of great importance to a commercial nation.

Looking towards the eastern hemisphere, although Spain has no territories on the continent of Asia, yet she is mistress of a group of islands on the borders of the Chinese Sea, and Eastern Ocean. The Philippine Islands are most admirably situated; they extend from the tenth to the twentieth degree of north latitude. They are only about 200 leagues from Canton, the great commercial depôt of the Chinese empire; they are nearly at an equal distance from the shores of Cochin China; and they will form at a future day the great medium of commerce between that opulent and populous empire and those provinces of America bordering on the North and South Pacific Ocean. To the south of the Philippines, two hundred miles distant, is the island of Borneo, the southern extremity of which is crossed by the equinoctial line. A little further to the south-west, lies New Guinea; and further, ten degrees to the south of the line, is the newly discovered continent of New Holland, which from its

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rapidly increasing European population and produce, promises to open a new source of commercial speculation to the inhabitants of the numerous populous islands of those seas. Besides, the archipelago of islands by which they are studded, now inhabited by semi-barbarian tribes, will add at a future day new value and splendour to the Philippines, which at the present day maintain their civil and military establishments without being any burden or expense to the mother country. These islands in the hands of Great Britain would be of more value to her than the whole empire of Hindostan, with her millions of inhabitants,—and the diamond mines of Golconda,—and all the revenues derived from India; for it would give her the complete command of the commerce of China, and of the whole extent of the American continent bordering on the North and South Pacific Ocean. With a fleet of men-of-war and steam-boats, a British admiral would be able to impose conditions on and dictate laws to the emperor of China from the ports of Manilla; and the British factories would not be amenable to the caprice of a Chinese mandarin, nor be subject to insults and violence from a Chinese mob. Spain yet holds her sceptre over these invaluable colonies, and I only hope she may duly appreciate their great importance, and not be induced to cede them on any consideration whatever to any other power. The day will come, perhaps it is not far distant, when the king of Spain will find the Philippines to be the richest jewel in his diadem.

In the western hemisphere Spain still holds colonial possessions of the greatest national importance. The islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico are not only fertile in soil, rich in productions, powerful in population, but their situation for the establishment of commercial depôts and naval stations is far superior to any of the West India colonies belonging to England, France, Denmark, Holland, or Sweden; although they are situated, like all the islands belonging to these powers, in the Western Atlantic Ocean, between North and South America, and forming a part of the archipelago of the Antilles, yet they enjoy local advantages peculiar to themselves. To the north of Cuba lie the Bahama islands, belonging to Great Britain, and the republic of the United States, which is separated from it by the Florida stream, about eighty miles across. Further to the north of the United States, stretching almost to the pole, are the British

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possessions of Canada and Nova Scotia. To the south it has the Mexican republic, Yucatan, the Mosquito shore, Panama, Costafirma, the British island of Jamaica, and the colony of Honduras. The western extremity of Cuba stretches into the Gulf of Mexico. To the east lies St. Domingo, (the republic of Hayti,) separated by fifty miles of channel; and to the windward of St. Domingo is Puerto Rico and the whole chain of the Antilles. Cuba completely commands the navigation of the Gulf of Mexico, the Bay of Honduras, and part of the Caribbean Sea. Not a vessel can sail from the coasts bordering on their waters into the Atlantic Ocean, without passing along the coasts of Cuba, through the Florida stream, or windward passage. That island may be most properly termed the key to the navigation of these seas, and the arbiter of their commerce. Six hundred miles to the westward of Cuba, is situate the beautiful island of Puerto Rico, which is only separated from the Haytian republic by a channel of fifteen leagues. Through this channel all vessels from the South American continent bound to Europe generally pass. It is only about 200 leagues from the coast of Venezuela. Thus these two islands, rich as they are in all the choicest productions of the tropics, are still of greater value and importance from their locality, commanding the navigation of the coasts of Louisiana, East and West Florida, and the whole extent of the coasts of the Mexican and Colombian republics,—comprising on the whole upwards of 1800 miles of coast, of which they may be considered to be the keys. Therefore, those who take an extended and proper view of national prosperity and power, will not value these islands merely as colonies, producing sugar and coffee, and yielding a certain revenue. When Spain shall have recovered in some degree from the effects of the wars and revolutions which have paralyzed her industry and nearly ruined her commerce, then Cuba and Puerto Rico will be of the greatest importance. By fostering, promoting, and protecting Spanish industry and trade, they will produce a greater revenue than they have hitherto done; they will be the warehouses which will supply the continent of North and South America with the productions of the Peninsula; they will be the fortresses to protect her commerce in these parts, the arsenals for the repair of her ships, and the harbours to afford them a shelter from the dreadful hurricanes so frequent and so

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fatal in those seas. The revolution of Spanish America has added new importance to these islands, which before that event were for the most part uncultivated and thinly inhabited. Their importance will progressively increase in proportion as the republics of the neighbouring continent become more tranquillized, and consequently more industrious and populous. The wealth, influence, and power, they would give to Spain at a future day, if properly governed and directed, is incalculable. They are, as I have before said, worth the whole of the continent which she has lost, whose commerce she would hold at her disposal with a very small naval force commanded by experienced and zealous officers.

Nations, as well as individuals, must prepare for future events and contingencies; for they cannot help observing in the extraordinary changes in the moral and physical world around us, the gradual development of those resources which the God of nature has given to man to discover and enjoy. The extension of commerce, by facilitating the intercourse of the most distant countries, and the mutual exchange of their industry and productions, has increased the riches and civilization, and with them the comforts and happiness of mankind. What immense advantages, therefore, will not the whole world receive,—what an increase in civilization and wealth, if it be found practicable to cut a passage through the Isthmus of Darien, thus uniting the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean, and thereby drawing Asia into closer contact with European commerce, manners, and policy. Engineers have already been sent to survey and to ascertain the practicability of effecting this passage. Such an enterprise would do more honour to the sovereigns of Europe, and confer more real benefit on mankind, than all the battles that have been won, and all the nations that have been conquered for ages. But even supposing that it shall prove impossible to cut a passage through the isthmus, in consequence of the nature of the land, the level of the waters, or from any other circumstance, may I be permitted—not to offer my opinion, but to ask those who are able to calculate probabilities, and who can command the means of carrying such a great, enlightened, and beneficent work into effect,—whether a rail road might not be established to cross the Isthmus of Panama? In consequence of the great improvements and advancement in the arts and

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sciences, the vast expansion which the minds of men have received from them and from commercial adventure and speculation, I cannot conceive that any obstacles oppose themselves to prevent such a work from being commenced and executed. The noble invention of steam navigation and steam carriages, and the progressive improvements which may be anticipated by new discoveries, would make a rail road across the Isthmus an excellent substitute for a canal. One depôt might be formed on the coast of Panama, bordering the Atlantic Ocean, in order to receive the cargoes of vessels from Europe; another on the coast bordering on the Pacific Ocean, to receive the cargoes coming from India, China, Persia, the shores of the North and South Pacific, New Holland, the Japanese empire, and of all the islands of these seas; thus all the ends of commerce would be facilitated, and the voyage to India and China would be shortened exceedingly. These are not the visionary schemes of an enthusiastic imagination; for such a project is acknowledged to be within the limits of possibility, and the whole habitable globe is interested in its execution. If one thousandth part of the treasures which have been squandered in fomenting rash revolutions, and in supporting the usurpations and quarrels of ambitious men for these last forty years, had been directed to the great work of uniting the whole world in commercial intercourse by opening a communication between the two oceans, then the nineteenth century would have bequeathed to posterity a more valuable remembrance than that which will be transmitted to them by history of the triumphs of usurpers, and the overthrow of empires and kingdoms, in order to gratify the caprice, the folly, or madness of the few.

If this project should ever be executed, the value of Cuba and Puerto Rico would become incalculably enhanced. The whole of the trade carried on between the continents of Europe and Asia would then have to pass by the very shores of these islands, and not by those of the French and English colonies, which are not so well situated. All the nations of the world would derive great benefit from the opening of this canal, or rail road; but Spain would reap advantages of greater magnitude than any other power from the peculiarly happy situation of her colonies, both in the eastern and western hemispheres.

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If we look forward to the future, judging from past improvements and discoveries, we may anticipate great events and changes in the commerce and policy of the world. Providence seems to have disposed that in the present age extraordinary things should be effected, in order to unite the whole world in one bond of union, by means of commerce. Taking on the whole an impartial, not an exaggerated view of the present position of the Spanish empire, in relation to herself and to other countries, and the great value and importance of her remaining colonies, we may be able to form some idea of her capabilities and resources; for notwithstanding all her losses and sacrifices, and all the vicissitudes which she has suffered, yet much may be expected from the union and patriotism of a brave and chivalrous nation, containing twelve millions of men, descendants of a race whose valour was displayed against the Moors in ages of warfare; who in later times conquered America, by feats of valour almost superhuman; who in the seventeenth century were irresistible in the field; and who, in our own days, have revived the great actions of their ancestors in the countless acts of heroism and devotion during the Peninsular war.

I shall here conclude my remarks on the colonies which Spain this day holds, by reiterating the words of a celebrated English writer, in speaking of the British West India islands, that they are of greater value to her than would be the whole continent of America, without the weight, the responsibility, and the precariousness of the government of such an immense tract of country. They are of paramount importance to Spain; in her hands, under her mild sway, they are opulent, flourishing, and the freest colonies in the world. Should they be so mad at any future day as to declare themselves independent, they would immediately fall a prey to other nations, or to the coloured race, or become the victims of anarchy, and sink into moral and political insignificance; while, on the other hand, they seem destined by Providence to act a prominent part, as component parts of a great nation, and to reap all the benefits of the union without the inconveniences; for Spain must be a great nation, greater than she has ever been; nature has marked her territory to be the seat of commercial and political greatness, and has planted on her land a race of men formed for mighty daring and for lofty enterprise.

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APPENDIX.

No. II.

A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE COMMERCE OF SOME PARTS OF SOUTH AMERICA, UNDER THE ROYAL AND REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS.

In order to prove what I have advanced with respect to the effects of revolution on the prosperity of the South American colonies, I here present, for the consideration of thinking men, whatever may be their political creed, an official statement of the imports and exports to and from the port of La Guayra, the principal port of the province of Venezuela, in the year 1807, under the Spanish government, and in the year 1831, under the free government of Colombia. Let it be recollected that 1807 was a year when Spain was at war with England. In 1809 and 1810, when the ports of South America were opened to that power, the imports and exports were much more considerable; it must also be borne in mind, that 1831 was the twenty-first year after the revolution of Colombia, and that its territories had ceased to be the theatre of war with the troops of Spain for upwards of ten years. The documents I present are the official returns made at the two periods stated by the custom-house of La Guayra, to the Spanish government in 1807, and to that of Colombia in 1831:—

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A Comparative View of the Imports and Exports of the Custom-House at La Guayra, in 1807, *under the Royal Government of Spain, and in the year* 1831, *under the Republican Government of Colombia.*

	Value of Imports.	Value of Exports.	Total Value of Imports and Exports.	Amount of Custom-House Duties.
	Dollars. Reals.	Dollars. Reals.	Dollars. Reals.	Dollars. Rls.
In 1807, under the royal government of Spain .	2,687,456 2	1,977,245 4½	4,664,701 6½	798,809½ 0
In 1831, under the republic of Colombia . . .	972,346 7½	939,206 4½	1,911,553 3½	294,452 0
Balance in favour of the period of royal government, and decrease of commerce under the government of Colombia . . .	1,715,109 2½	1,038,039	2,753,148 3	504,357½

Comparison between the Produce of Agriculture exported from the Port of La Guayra in the year 1807, *under the Royal Government of Spain, and in* 1831, *under the Republican Government of Colombia.*

Produce Exported.	In the year 1807, under the Royal Government of Spain.	In the year 1831, under the Republican Government of Colombia.	Balance in favour of the Royal Administration, demonstrating the immense decrease of Agricultural produce under the Republican Government.
Indigo . . .	lbs. 381,179	lbs. 188,733½	lbs. 173,445½
Cotton . . .	— 380,390	— 1400	— 378,990
Rum	brls. 268	brls. 6	brls. 262
Cacao	fas. 50,989 84 lbs.	fas. 16,028 83 lbs.	fas. 34,961 1 lb.
Aniseed . . .	lbs. 8394		lbs. 8,394
Brasilete . . .	— 56,299		— 56,299
Barilla . . .	— 12	lbs. 5	— 7
Cowhides . . .	32,401	12,508	19,893
Deerskins . . .	630		630
Copper . . .	lbs. 19,533	lbs. 1239	18,294
Skins of Cordovan	2231		2231
Calaguaga . .	lbs. 2266		lbs. 2266
Europ. Goods, val.	dolls. 6478½		dolls. 6478½
Indian Corn, value	— 13,622⅝		— 13,622⅝
Horns of Cattle .	69,597	18,250	51,347
Logs of Wood .	34		34
Peruvian Bark .	lbs. 41,666		41,666
Tacamahaca . .	1006		1006

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By this simple, clear, and impartial statement of facts, those who still advocate the cause of violent revolution must be convinced of their error, although a false shame may prevent them making a frank and candid acknowledgement. Who can view the flourishing state of agriculture and commerce in South America, under the government of Spain, and its decay under the republican government, without recognising at one glance the advantages that country enjoyed under the royal administration? The port of La Guayra alone, in 1807, produced a revenue of 798,809½ dollars, while the whole custom-house revenues of the province of Venezuela, in 1831, embracing the ports of La Guayra, Puerto Cabello, Maracaibo, Guayana, Cumana, Barcelona, Margarita, and Coro, only produced 721,405½ dollars, with duties infinitely higher than when under the Spanish government. The total amount of imports and exports to and from all the ports of the province already mentioned, in 1831, under the republic, was 4,216,233 dollars; while in 1807, the amount of imports and exports at the port of La Guayra alone, was 4,664,701 dollars, 6 reals, exceeding, by nearly half a million, the value of the imports and exports of the whole province at the present period.

Although the data which I have just offered are official, and will bear the test of the most scrupulous investigation, yet the advocates of revolution may still allege that I have only selected one year of royal administration in order to form a comparison which they may represent as partial. I anticipated, and therefore have come fully prepared to meet objections and arguments of this kind. I now beg to offer a statement of the revenue of the port of La Guayra, and all the ports of the province of Venezuela, on an average of five years previous to the revolution, which will prove most satisfactorily, and beyond the possibility of contradiction, the prosperity which that country enjoyed under the royal government, and the extraordinary decrease of agricultural produce and commerce from the effects of that revolution.

	Dollars.
From the year 1805 to 1809, a period of 5 years, the imports to & exports from La Guayra, amounted to	17,632,962
Ditto, Porto Cabello	5,500,000
Ditto, ports of Cumana and Barcelona . .	3,000,000
Ditto, ports of Guayana, Maracaibo, and Coro . .	8,868,000
	35,000,962

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This is the total amount of imports and exports to and from all the ports of the province for five years, making an average of seven millions of dollars annually, which is nearly double the amount imported and exported at the present period of republican government. In 1809, the quantity of indigo produced exceeded considerably what was raised in 1807. From La Guayra and Puerto Cabello alone there were exported 697,451 lbs., besides what was shipped from other ports of the province; there were also the same year 104,610 fanegas of cacao exported from the province. In April, 1810, the revolution burst forth, but that year it had little influence in diminishing the quantity of agricultural produce; for the crops had been already prepared, and the scenes of proscription and death which shortly after filled the dungeons, and deluged the country with blood, had not yet commenced their dreadful operation. We therefore find, that, in 1810, the exports were considerable; and from the port of La Guayra alone, were exported that year—

47,880 fanegas of cacao.
70,149 quintals of coffee.
6,332 quintals of cotton.
5,082 quintals of indigo.
36,756 raw hides.
4,258 quintals of dye wood.

The custom-house duties of La Guayra, that same year, produced a nett revenue of 804,000 dollars, which is much more than they yielded in 1807; a fact which proves incontestably that I have selected for my comparisons one of the least productive years of the royal government.

From 1811 to 1814, the revolution raged with overwhelming violence; a great number of the industrious and peaceable inhabitants were destroyed, and the whole face of the country was desolated by fire and sword. In 1814, order and confidence were restored by the re-establishment of the royal administration, and the disasters of the two preceding years were in a great degree repaired; which fact may be perceived by referring to the produce of the six succeeding years of the royal government, during which time, although a large army was supported in the province, and the inhabitants were continually alarmed by the

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invasions of the revolutionary party, yet, notwithstanding these years of agitation, and, I may say, of military government, in consequence of the state of the country, the several provinces produced a greater revenue and more agricultural produce than during any year since the reign of republicanism.

Average Exports from the Port of La Guayra, for six years of the Royal Government during the Civil War.

		COCOA. fan.	COFFEE. quin.	COTTON. quin.	INDIGO. lbs.	HIDES.	DYEWOOD. quin.
Average produce for four years.	1815 1816 1817 1818	35,037	32,607	3444	921	34,620	2300
Average of two years:	1819 1820	28,300	33,500	9127	370	20,000	

I have here presented for examination the most unfavourable period of the royal government, during the war which raged in the province of Venezuela; yet still the produce exceeds considerably the amount exported this day, after an administration of twelve years of a government undisturbed by any hostile attacks from a foreign enemy, and supported by an immense foreign capital that flowed into the country, and which, one would suppose, ought to have imparted life and vigour to agriculture and commerce. In 1820, the provinces were occupied by contending armies, and in 1821 were finally evacuated by the Spanish army, leaving the republican party the undisputed masters of that beautiful country. The use they have made of their liberty, and the melancholy experience of misrule which they have derived from their emancipation, may be ascertained by adverting to the astonishing decrease of their agriculture and commerce, the ruin of their national credit in foreign countries, and the diminution of their population. Another most convincing proof of the advantages which they enjoyed under the protection of the royal government, and of the destruction which civil war and anarchy have brought on the country, may be found by comparing the revenue of Venezuela in 1810 and 1820. The nett revenue of the Custom-house in the year 1810, was $2,170,000; in 1820—$1,539,000.

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Deficit caused by the revolution up to 1820, in the custom-house revenue, $631,000.

Nett revenue of tobacco at both periods: 1810—$698,000; 1820—$408,000.

Deficit caused by the revolution in the revenue of tobacco, up to 1820, $290,000.

Total revenue of the provinces at both periods: in 1810—$2,868,000; in 1820—1,947,000.

Total annual deficit caused by the revolution in the revenue, for ten years up to 1820, $921,000.

The revenue derived from tobacco produced during the republic, in 1831, 187,844 dollars, and during the royal government in 1810, 698,000; which leaves an annual deficit of 510,156 dollars since the revolution. The custom-houses of the five provinces produced in 1810, 2,170,000, and in 1831 they produced only 721,405 dollars, leaving a yearly deficit, attributable to the same cause, of 1,448,595; and the whole annual deficit up to 1831, according to the statements published by the Colombian government, amounts to 1,958,751 dollars; being a decrease of more than one half of the revenue, with all the advantages of a free trade with every nation on earth.

In order to show the impartiality of my observations, and that I should have been fully justified in using stronger language than I have hitherto used, in reprobating violent revolutions, as destructive of the peace and prosperity of nations, I beg leave to call the attention of the public to the statement published in 1830 by the Colombian government, in which a comparison is made of the immense diminution of every species of agricultural produce, since the date of the revolution in that country. This is a document which carries with it weight and conviction, for it is framed and published by the enemies of Spain—it is published in the republic of Colombia, by order of the government of that country.

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Statement of the Value of the Produce of the Provinces of Venezuela, before the Revolution of 1810, *and in* 1830 *under the Government of the Republic of Colombia.*

	Value of Produce before the revolution of 1810.	Value of Produce under the Republic in 1830.
Horned Cattle .	$4,515,000	1,128,750
Mules . .	600,000	150,000
Cocoa . .	3,000,000	1,500,000
Indigo . .	1,200,000	120,000
Coffee . .	960,000	240,000
Sugar Cane .	1,600,000	1,600,000
Cotton . .	600,000	265,000
Tobacco . .	310,000	
Total .	12,785,000	5,003,750

This exhibits the immense deficit of 7,781,250 dollars in the value of agricultural produce of the province of Venezuela alone, occasioned by twelve years of rebellion. An idea may be formed from these statements of the deplorable state to which republican principles, prematurely declared and injudiciously applied, have reduced the whole continent of Spanish America. What can the abettors of the South American revolution say to these statements? They cannot deny facts published by the Colombian authorities, who, it is to be presumed, have a deep interest in making the state of their finances appear in the most advantageous point of view, in order to repair, if possible, the ruined credit of the republic. Allow me to ask them and the world, to what is this difference in the state of agriculture, commerce, and revenue, between these epochs of royal and republican government to be attributed? If they answer impartially, according to the evidence before them, they must say that it consists in the form of government, the concentration of command, and a just and upright administration, during the period of Spanish dominion. Therefore it cannot be supposed by reason or common sense that that government can be good, or adapted to a country, under which agriculture and commerce decline, where the population diminishes and becomes idle and vicious, under which a few live at the expense of the community, with the name of liberty in their mouths, practically

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exercising Asiatic despotism and oppression. I appeal to every foreigner who has ever landed on the shores of South America, since the change of system, whether he be a merchant or a soldier,—whether he be a friend or foe to their government,—if this is not the case in the republic of Colombia, and in all the republics which exist in Spanish America. The desolating fire of rebellion has not only withered the prosperity of that beautiful country, by destroying its agriculture and commerce, but it has nearly exterminated the population by civil war, by proscription and expatriation. Read and shudder! Before the revolution of 1810, the five provinces of Venezuela contained 900,000 souls, according to the ecclesiastical census, but it is supposed that they contained a considerably greater number. In 1820 the Spanish government ordered an exact census to be made, which, compared with the ecclesiastical estimate, produced the following results, and which I detail with the same elaborate precision that I found in the original documents.

Population of 182 Towns and Villages in the Province of Caraccas in 1820	. . . .	285,210
Do. of 20 do. in do. of Coro *	. . .	14,730
Do. of 82 do. in do. of Maracaibo	. .	70,000
Do. of 47 do. in do. of Barinas	. . .	40,000
Do. of 50 do. in do. of Cumana Do. of 21 do. in do. of Barcelona Do. of 2 do. in do. of Margarita Do. of 41 do. in do. of Guayana	. .	30,000
446 towns and villages, containing a population of		460,940†

Which shows a decrease in the population up to the year 1820, caused by the revolution, of 440,000 souls. This is one of the most dreadful pictures ever presented to the world, of the destruction of human life, in so short a period, by a revolution.

* Before the revolution there were 43,000 souls in this province, the inhabitants of which were always faithful to the king.

† In this number are included 45,000 slaves, who existed in the five provinces.

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History does not present us a solitary example of the population of a country—a fertile country—abounding in all the necessaries of life, without a desolating plague, having beenproportionably reduced in so short a period. The impression is stronger and more dreadful, from the conviction that it is reality,—that it has taken place in our own day. I am not, therefore, surprised at the present extraordinary decrease of agriculture and commerce in that unfortunate country, which has been so long the theatre of civil war. If the system of anarchy is there still persevered in, we may expect nothing less than the total extinction of agriculture and commerce, and the continued decrease of the population. Every trace of civilization must eventually disappear from the country—a country which is so eminently gifted by nature—but which has been made so eminently wretched by the violence and ambition of man.

The British nation committed a very great error in advocating the revolution of a people unprepared for free institutions, and incapable of governing themselves. The mercantile interests of England, more than those of any other country, have suffered by the change. It is very erroneous to suppose that Spain enjoyed the exclusive trade of South America; England, although indirectly, derived the greatest advantage from that trade while under Spanish dominion. Out of 2,687,456¼ dollars value of goods imported into La Guayra in 1807, under the royal government, only 164,449 dollars, 5 reals, were in the produce of the Peninsula; the remainder was foreign manufactures, principally British. This amount far exceeds the value of British goods now annually imported into the whole province of Venezuela. I will go farther, and assert that it exceeds the total amount of importations from all the countries of Europe at this day to that free state. The nett revenue arising from the tobacco produced in Caraccas, in 1807, amounted to 698,000 dollars; and according to the report of the Colombian minister of finance in 1832, it only amounts to 187,844 dollars, 1 real. On the day of the revolution, there were three millions of dollars in the government treasury of the province of Venezuela, with no foreign or domestic debt. In 1832 there was not a sixpence in the treasury—and the republic has a heavy domestic debt, and a foreign debt which would not be covered by the sale of the whole territory.

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This reasoning and these comparisons may be applied to every republic on the continent of Spanish America. In every part contributions are arbitrarily imposed by military chiefs. The generals and officers of all grades exceed the number of soldiers; civil war, congresses, decrees, edicts, menaces, revolts, and assassinations, form the picture of these free governments. That the mercantile interests of Great Britain have suffered more by the revolution of South America than even those of Spain, can be easily proved, without any effort of ingenuity, or the necessity of recurring to the arguments of sophistry. In the first place, the immense sums advanced by British merchants to the South American republics cannot be refunded, nor even the interest paid. This may be considered as a total loss of so much British capital. During the existence of the Spanish government, a greater amount of British manufactures was consumed than at the present day, which is clearly and unequivocally proved by a reference to the importations at both periods of government. These importations, the produce of British industry, were introduced even in time of war with Spain, although through an indirect channel. But this does not alter the question; they were purchased and paid for in bullion or specie by the Spanish merchants, who, even during war, were faithful guardians of the property confided to them by their enemies. During the Spanish administration, there were tranquillity, industry, agricultural produce, and riches—good faith, and honest consignees. But now, in 1832, the boasted republics offer the reverse of this picture; there exists nothing but the empty name of republics—an uncultivated land—a miserable, discontented population—and faithless, vacillating governments.

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